

KEYS TO



KASHMIR

A LALLA ROOKH PUBLICATION

"Like some supremely beautiful woman, whose beauty is almost impersonal and above human desire, such is Kashmir in all its feminine beauty of river and Valley and lake and graceful trees. And then another aspect of this magic beauty would come to view, a masculine one, of hard mountains and precipices and snow-capped peaks and glaciers, and cruel and fierce torrents rushing down to the Valleys below".

Astride the trade-route between India and Central Asia, Kashmir has been the meeting place of various cultures. In its long and chequered history there have been periods when it became the synagogue of the foreign scholars and erudites and many cultural missions emanated from this country. Its artwares—shawls, papier-mache, woodwork, silk and the like—have added to its fame.

After centuries of political domination, there could be no doubt of the widespread awakening among the people and of a growing feeling of self-reliance and strength. The Nationalist movement which started in the early thirties of the present century has changed the face of Kashmir during these few years.

Of late this "Land of Lalla Rookh" has attracted world attention by becoming a subject of discussion on the forum of the United Nations Assembly.

In this book the general reader, student or correspondent will find something here or there to interest him. It is a handful of clues for the stranger in Kashmir or the general reader in India or further afield who would like to know something of the background of Kashmir's past and present.

KEYS TO
KASHMIR

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Dedicated
to
NEW KASHMIR

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"... While part of India, it (Kashmir) is in fact the heart of Asia and for countless ages great caravans have passed from India right up to Central Asia through this State. . I wonder how many people realise that Kashmir is further north than Tibet. .".

Jawaharlal Nehru.

FOREWORD

In this book, the general reader, tourist, student or correspondent will find something here or there to interest him. The specialist may even find a clue. The scholar will find enormous gaps. This book did not set out to be a history of Kashmir or a guide-book to its territories. It is a handful of clues for the stranger in Kashmir or the general reader in India or further afield, who would like to know something of the background of Kashmir, past and present.

Kashmir is a land with an ancient history and we have dipped into that history with only a small spoon.

We have attempted to present a sketch of the country, its people, its customs, its problems and its hopes. If the visitor to Kashmir, after reading this book, feels he has been helped to a better understanding of the people who pass to and fro across its beautiful landscape, then this little work will not have been produced in vain.

The Editors.

TRAVELLERS

THE first European to travel over the Banihal range from the summer inferno of the Indian plains and to leave us his record was Francois Bernier, a French physician attached to the Moghul court at Delhi in the 17th century. He travelled from India with the royal cavalcade in 1665. In the preamble to his letter which describes the journey to Kashmir, Bernier wrote :

"Concerning the extent, the magnificence and the mode of ordering the Camp of the Great Mogol. The number of the Elephants, Camels, Mules and Men-Porters necessary for its transport. The arrangement of Bazars or Royal Markets, the quarters set apart for the Omras or Nobles and the rest of the Army. The area occupied by the army when thus encamped. The various difficulties met with and how overcome. The measures taken to prevent robberies. The modes of travelling adopted by the king, the princesses and the rest of the Harem. The risks one encounters on approaching too near the Seraglio. The various kinds of hunting enjoyed by the King, accompanied by all his army. The number of persons accompanying the Army and how they exist."

His description of the Royal progress and the detailed plans required for its success are unique. He tells of the magnificence and pomp of that vast army which wound its way across the parched plains to the hills. He strikes another note, however, when he describes in another letter his physical condition during that journey. It was March 1665, when he wrote to a friend :

Sir,

The sun is but just now rising, yet the heat is insupportable. There is not a cloud to be seen nor a breath of air to be felt. My horses are exhausted; they have not seen a blade of grass since we quitted Lahor. My Indians, notwithstanding their black, dry and hard skin, are incapable of further exertion. The whole of my face, my feet, and my hands are flayed. My body too is entirely covered with small red blisters, which prick like

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needles. Yesterday one of our poor troopers, who was without a tent, was found dead at the foot of a tree, whither he had crept for shelter. I feel as if I should myself expire before night. All my hopes are in four or five limes still remaining for lemonade, and in a little dry curd which I am about to drink diluted with water and with sugar. Heaven bless you ! the ink dries at the end of my pen and the pen itself drops from my hand."

When the cavalcade reached Bhimber, "the entrance to the mountains of Kashmire", Bernier estimated the number of porters assembled there for the carrying of the royal baggage at thirty thousand men, "some sent by the Governor of Kashmire and by the neighbouring Rajas, and others who are come voluntarily in the expectation of earning a little money".

After the long and exhausting journey, Bernier must have been no less glad than the Emperor, Aurangzeb, to see the green hills of Kashmir before him, and to feel its coolness and freshness after the burning heat through which they had travelled for many weeks.

Today the traveller from Delhi reaches Srinagar, in Kashmir, in two and a half hours by air, and can look down on the tortuous country through which Bernier painfully travelled with the great army of Aurangzeb.

Kashmir did not disappoint Bernier. Of it he wrote lyrically, conferring on it the title, "Paradise of the Indies". It surpassed his expectations. Here are his impressions of the Valley :

"The numberless streams which issue from the mountains maintain the valley and the hillocks in the most delightful verdure. The whole kingdom wears the appearance of a fertile and highly cultivated garden. Villages and hamlets are frequently seen through the luxuriant foliage. Meadows and vineyards, fields of rice, wheat, hemp, saffron, and many sorts of vegetables, among which are intermingled trenches filled with water, rivulets, canals, and several small lakes, vary the enchanting scene. The whole ground is enamelled with our European flowers and plants, and covered with apple, pear, plum, apricot, and walnut trees, all bearing fruit in great abundance."

That description still applies today to Kashmir. More.

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over, the sun is never unkind and there is no malaria. This Valley, ringed by the snows of the Himalayan range, a jewel on the rim of Central Asia, has attracted the pens of many travellers since Bernier, who also did not forget the Kashmiri people in his chronicles. Of them he wrote :

"The Kachemirys are celebrated for wit, and considered much more intelligent and ingenious than the Indians. In poetry and the sciences they are not inferior to the Persians. They are also very active and industrious...."

"...The people of Kachmire are proverbial for their clear complexions and fine forms. They are as well made as Europeans, and their faces have neither the Tartar flat nose, nor the small pig eyes that distinguish the natives of Kacheguer, and which generally mark those of Great Tibet. The women especially are very handsome; and it is from this country that nearly every individual, when first admitted to the court of the Great Mogol, selects wives or concubines, that his children may be whiter than the Indians and pass as genuine Mogols."

Many travellers after Bernier were to agree with him about the beauty of Kashmiri women, and many were to dispute his opinion. One, who could not agree with Bernier, that in general they were beautiful, attributed the lack of beauty he noted as due to the great numbers of beautiful girls who were taken out of Kashmir into India over a period of generations as wives, concubines and, later, for more commercial reasons to the cities of the plains. However, the beautiful woman is still to be seen in Kashmir, in city and village ; but whether on the scale as praised by Bernier. we cannot know.

The second European traveller of note to write of Kashmir was a Jesuit Priest, the Italian Hippolyte Desideri who hailed from Pistoia near Florence. In November 1714, he reached the city of Srinagar. He, too, was struck with what he saw :

"The whole district round the city", he wrote, "is not only beautiful, but extremely fertile, producing abundant crops and a great variety of fruit, such as grapes, pears, apples, walnuts, peaches and apricots, plums, cherries, almonds, pistachio nuts, quinces, and similar fruit. In spring the many European flowers which are not found in quantities in other parts of the Mogol, such as roses, tulips, anemones, narcissii, hyacinths and the like are a

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great delight to the people of the country and to all who happen to be there. For these reasons Kashmir is called by everyone *Behesh* (Behisht), which means terrestrial paradise..."

Desideri saw the Kashmiri shawl for the first time, the shawl that was to become famous throughout the world. In the Italian manner, he spelt it *Scial*.

"But most precious and magnificent", he wrote, "are the clothes called *Scial* in both Hindustani and Persian. These *Scials* are cloaks which envelop the head while the ends fall on either side of the body : thus the head, neck, shoulders, arms, breast and back till below the hips and nearly to the knees are protected. These cloaks are so fine, delicate and soft that though very wide and long they can be folded into so small a space as almost to be hidden in a closed hand. At the same time, although so fine and thin, they not only keep out the cold, but really warm the body ; they are, therefore, very much warm in winter."

He had something to say of the Kashmiri winter, for he had arrived in the Valley in November and had witnessed its onset.

"When we arrived in Kashmir the great cold had already begun and snow was falling on the mountains : it takes a long time to melt and is so deep that all the roads were blocked, especially the one to Tibet. As it was impossible to continue our journey, I took a house and we remained six whole months in Kashmir."

Snowed up, the Jesuit must have been hard put to it to keep amused, for even the pen palls in such conditions. Today he could go to Gulmarg and enjoy the winter sports, or sit over a warm stove and hear about them from others.

In 1783 an Englishman, Forster, an officer of the Bengal Army, travelled from India to St. Petersburg in Russia. He passed through Kashmir which had come under the rule of the Afghans. After the downfall of the Moghuls, Kashmir was to suffer much under these brutal and savage conquerors. Here started the degeneration of the Kashmiris, for they were to know poverty and hunger for many generations, as other conquerors followed their Afghan overlords. Forster writes :

"At this time no less than 2,000,000 Rupees are extracted by the Afghan Governor, who, if his tribute be regularly remitted to court, is allowed to execute with impunity every act of violence.

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This extreme rigour has sensibly affected the deportment of the Kashmirians, who shrink with dread from the Afghan oppression and are fearful of making any display of opulence.... During my stay in Kashmir I often witnessed the harsh treatment which the common people received at the hands of their masters, who rarely issued an order without a blow of the side of their hatchet, a common weapon of the Afghans and used by them in war as a battle-axe."

Kashmir had gone into decline. The stranger would still see that magnificent scenery and those intelligent and gifted people, but they would be poorer and, as the years passed, a gradual debasement would be noticed in these people, a tendency to shiftiness, for they were to face the full anguish of total conquest by barbarous and heartless enemies. Still a "paradise" to the eye, Kashmir became a slum for its people, a place from which they had even to obtain permission to escape. For when they were penniless and starving, they were still useful to their masters, as slaves to carry loads or to hold lights in order that a banquet might be beautified.

An English traveller, Vigne, published his book, "Travels in Kashmir, Ladak, Iskardo", in 1842. He arrived in Bombay in 1833 and travelled extensively in the Punjab before entering Kashmir through Jammu. At that time the Sikh power established in the Punjab had driven the Pathans from the Valley of Kashmir and made the country part of the Sikh dominions. Their rule was as cruel as that of the Pathans and, like the Pathans, they regarded Kashmir and the Kashmiris as a source of revenue and labour.

While travelling through Jammu towards Kashmir, Vigne for the first time heard the name of Gulab Singh, the ruler of Jammu, who was later to add Kashmir to his petty kingdom. Wrote Vigne :

" On the third day after leaving Bissuli, I passed the Oju river, which rises in the mountains of Ramnagar, and afterwards joins the Ravi in the plains : and, upon arriving at the petty Sikh fort of Samur Thung, the Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Chobdar, or Silver Stick, being in attendance, I was surprised at being told by the commandant that he could not give me any *Kulis*, or otherwise assist me, without an order from the Ramnagar Rajah, Suchyt Singh. He was, in fact, an officer of Gulab Singh of Jamu, who, jealous of my

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passing through his country, and thinking it necessary to shew his power, had adopted this plan, in order to ascertain of what rank and consequence I was, and whether I was not connected with the government, by trying how far the British political agent at Lodiana would interfere to assist and protect me."

Vigne was not far wrong in thus assessing Raja Gulab Singh's foresight. Later, Gulab Singh was to show a certain diplomatic skill in the way in which he acquired the territory of Kashmir when the empire of his Sikh master, Ranjit Singh, broke up after his conflict with the British. Continuing his account, Vigne says :

"I had never heard of Gulab Singh, and believed that all was right, although annoyed at finding that Runjeet's old servant was of so little service to me under difficulties. I waited patiently for the remainder of a very rainy day ; and slept in a wretched hovel in preference to a wet tent. At four o'clock the next day I thought myself lucky in being told that a messenger had arrived and I was to be allowed to proceed; and I wound up by innocently writing to Gulab Singh, telling him that I was quite sure the man had made a mistake, and that I hoped he would not punish him on my account. To this, in due time, an answer was returned, to the effect that Gulab Singh had graciously forgiven the man, in consequence of my application in his behalf."

It would appear that Gulab Singh and Vigne were well matched in their diplomatic skill. Eventually, Vigne reached the palace of the Raja Gulab Singh. Here is his own description of his arrival :

"The next morning I ascended to the Palace, by a long paved way that led up the hill. The town of Jamu is built upon the summit of the first wooded sloping ridge that rises from the plains of the Punjab, and at the place where it is divided by a narrow ravine, which allows an exit to the river Taui, in its way to its junction with the Chunab.

"The town is upon the right bank of the ravine, and the white buildings of the palace, and of the fort, which is on the opposite, are seen glistening in the sun, from a great distance in the plains.

"I do not know exactly the population of Jamu ; it contains a good bazar, numerous streets, and, perhaps, 7,000 or 8,000 people.

"The courtyard of the palace was alive with the crowds of officers and attendants, gorgeously apparelled in red and yellow

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shawls and silk, and armed with spears, swords, shields, and matchlocks. Two guns were discharged close to me just as I entered, by way of salute ; and Gulab Singh received me in the open pillared hall of the palace, and excused himself for not having called upon me, by saying that he had caught a rheumatism and stiffness in the limbs, in consequence of having been with Runjit to Peshawaur ; all of which he supposed I should believe as well as the assertion which he shortly afterwards made, that his ancestors had reigned at Jamu for 5,000 years. He afterwards asked me whether it was true that the King of France paid tribute to the King of England, and some other questions equally absurd, by way of ascertaining whether I was disposed to deceive him. "

Yes, these two seem to have been well matched, but Vigne does not seem to have foreseen that this man, Gulab Singh, would not only soon rule Kashmir, as well as Jammu, but would also ensure that his family ruled it for a hundred years after him. Vigne described Gulab Singh as follows :

"Gulab Singh, the present Rajah of Jamu is the elder brother of the Rajahs Dhihan and Suchyt Singh, who were originally Meas, i.e., squires, or dependents, of the old Rajah's family at Jamu. Gulab Singh owes his first rise to his brother, Dhihan Singh, who, when his first influence was fully established at the court of Lahore, found no difficulty in introducing him to the notice of the Maharajah, as already mentioned in my visit to Ghuzni and Afghanistan. Gulab Singh had quarrelled with the Rajah of Jamu, his rightful master, and entered into the service of the Rajah of Kishtwar, with whom he remained three years; but hearing that Runjit was preparing an expedition against Jamu, he went to him and offered his services. The Maharajah gave him a command, the old Rajah ran off, and Gulab Singh took possession of Jamu for Runjit, and then wrote to Tegh Singh, the Rajah of Kishtwar, informing him falsely that the Maharajah was going to send a force against him also. The latter and his people prepared for resistance, and sent an answer to say that they had done so. Gulab Singh then forged a paper containing an invitation from the chief men in Tegh Singh's durbar to the Maharajah, as an encouragement to him to come forward and invade Kishtwar, and sent it with a note to the Rajah himself, in which he told him that he must be joking to talk of resistance, when the chief men of the country, who pretended to be his friends, were opposed to him. Upon this, Tegh Singh ordered two of his servants to assassinate his Vuzir, as he entered the durbar the next morning. They, however, only wounded him severely, and then the Rajah disowned the

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deed, and wrote to Gulab Singh, who advised him to put the Vuzir to death, as a punishment for his ingratitude, as well as out of regard to his own safety; and the letter further told him to leave his army, and come to Jamu alone, under the promise of an introduction to the Maharajah, who would secure him in possession of his dominion.

"Tegh Singh, having been Rajah of Kishtwar of twenty-seven years, was deceived throughout, and repaired to Jamu with only a few followers, where he was kept for three months upon an allowance of 100 rupees a day, which was afterwards reduced to ten; and in the meantime Gulab Singh got possession of Kishtwar without opposition, and then went to Runjit, and pointed out how much he had done for him; and his face, to use an oriental phrase, became whiter for it in the sight of his master. The unfortunate Rajah then went to Lahore, where Runjit kept him for a long time without an audience. He appeared, however, in the Maharajah's presence at the festival of the Huli, and the sycophant Sirdars pretended to intercede on his behalf...

"Gulab Singh, however, I was informed bribed Tegh Singh's servant to poison his master for a reward of 10,000 rupees; and his death was effected by mixing the poison in a cup of Sherbet. His two sons were with him when he died; they escaped to Lodiana, and the eldest joined Shah Shuja's unsuccessful expedition against Kabul in 1834; and when he was beaten, wandered in the disguise of a *fakir* through Kashmir where I saw him; and thence again through the mountains to Lodiana."

Vigne passed on into the valley of Kashmir which was soon to become a part of the Rajah of Jammu's domains. He left Jammu in the heat of July 1835, noting :

"We are now, as before remarked, on the highroad of the Mogul Emperors from Lahore to Kashmir."

Standing on the high tower of a house in Wazirabad, Vigne saw the great Pir Panjal. He tells us :

"The Pir Panjal, as the range that separates Kashmir from the plains of the Panjab is called, is seen to great effect from the summit of the tower; its line of snowy peaks occupying about forty-five degrees of the horizon, to the north-north-east; and from the garden wall to the front of the snow, which is about eighty miles distant, there appears to be but one unbroken flat, with a verdant foreground and scarcely a single tree upon it, as far as the eye can collect its extent."

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Later he says :

"I found afterwards not a day passed whilst I was on the path to Kashmir, and even when travelling in the valley, that I did not see the bleached remains of some unfortunate wretch who had fallen a victim either to sickness or starvation and principally, as I had afterwards reason to believe, to the consequence of the dreadful scarcity with which Kashmir was afflicted, after the earthquake and cholera had done their worst."

Earthquake, famine and cholera had combined to wreck that little semblance of ordered life the Kashmiris had been able to retain under their masters, the Pathans and the Sikhs.

Of the great earthquake of 1828, Vigne collected the information that :

"On the night of June 26, 1828, (Twenty-fourth of Zilheja, year of the Hegira 1244) at half past ten, a very severe shock was felt, which shook down a great many houses, and killed a great number of people ; perhaps 1,000 persons were killed, and 1,200 houses shaken down ; although, being built with a wooden framework, the houses are less liable to fall than an edifice of brick or stone. The earth opened in several places about the city ; and fetid water, and rather warm, rose rapidly from the clefts, and then subsided. These clefts being in the soil, soon closed again, and left scarcely any traces. I saw the remains of one, fifteen yards long and two wide ; but it was filled up, or nearly. Huge rocks and stones came rattling down from the mountains. On that night only one shock took place ; but just before sunrise there was another, accompanied by a terrific and lengthened explosion, louder than a cannon. On that day there were twenty such shocks, each with a similar explosion.

"The inhabitants were, of course, in the open country. The river sometimes appeared to stand still, and then rushed forward. For the remaining six days of Zilheja, and whole of the next two months of Moharrem and Safur, there were never less than 100, and sometimes 200 or more shocks in the day, all accompanied with an explosion ; but it was remarked, that when the explosion was loudest, the shock was the less...

"At the end of the two above mentioned months, the number decreased to ten or fifteen in the twenty-four hours, and the noise became less, and the earthquakes gradually ceased. About this time the cholera made its appearance. A census of the dead was taken at first, but discontinued when it was found that many thou-

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sands had died in twenty-one days."

Interested in everything he saw and heard during his travels, Vigne did not neglect the folklore, the superstitions or the odd relics of ancient animism which he found here and there. He has something to say of the various spirits which lived (and still live, some say) in the Valley of Kashmir :

"The Jins (geni)", he tells us, "are of both sexes and all religions ; they are very mischievous, and in the exercise of evil would seem to be almost omnipotent and omnipresent. The Deyu are cannibal giants ; and the ifrites (elves), who were in attendance once upon Solomon, seem to have been of this nature. The Yech is nearly the Satyr of heathen mythology. The Dyut is the inhabitant of houses ; and to him are attributed all noises, losses and domestic troubles. They are propitiated with food once a year ; and would appear to resemble the brownie of the Scottish Highlands.

"The Bram-bram-chuk is said to be seen in wet and marshy places, at night. From its description as a rapidly moving light, it may be pronounced to be a will o' the wisp...

"The Whop...resembled a cat or dog, and resided in old buildings. The Mushran appears in the shape of a dirty-looking and very old man, who seizes a person with a parental hug, and produces thenceforth a wasting and dangerous decline. The Ghor, or Yech, is a feeder upon dead bodies.

"The Diegins are the females of the Degus. It is said they often seek husbands among mortals, but that their attachment is productive of fatal consequences, as its object dies in the course of two or three months. The Dyn, who is the witch of Europe, will sometimes carry her malignant disposition so far as to eat a man's heart out.

"The Rantus is the Aal of Afghanistan, perhaps the same as the Tral, or fairy, of Scandinavia, and the Goul of the Persian and Turkish tales. Her feet are reversed, and her eyes placed perpendicularly and parallel to the nose.

"The Rih is a nondescript female, said to be very handsome ; she will entice a man into a snare for the purpose of eating him.

"The Peri is a being beautiful enough to compensate for all these horrors. Their bodies are made up of the four elements ; but fire is the predominant ingredient without consuming the rest... But their amours with a mortal are followed by death from fire."

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Tearing himself away from this ghostly company, Vigne writes :

“ The French Asiatic Society were desirous of knowing whether the ‘*metier d’un copyiste*’ still existed in Kashmir. There are, perhaps, 100 Kartibs, or book writers, still existing in Kashmir at the rate of about five to ten rupees for a small quire or juzu.

“ And then the great epic poems of the Mahabharat and the Bhagavata, or life of Krishna, and other Sanskrit works, make mention of Kashmir as a country of eminent Katri Rajahs and learned men. But independently of its own recorded claims to the greatest antiquity, the situation of Kashmir is sufficient, I think, to convince anyone that it must have been a place of the utmost notoriety from the very earliest ages. The fame of its wine, its women, and its verdant plains, must soon have extended to the deserts of Central Asia, and other regions on the north of Hindu Kosh, and the inhabitants of the parched plains of Hindustan, who considered the animals around them as the victims of a justly graduated scale of retributive punishment, must soon have learned to regard it as a terrestrial paradise...”

Later, after an eulogy on the beauties and natural wealth of the Valley, Vigne goes on to say :

“ Kashmir will become the focus of Asiatic civilisation ; a miniature England in the heart of Asia...and, presenting so many attractions, it will become the *sine qua non* of the oriental traveller, whether he be disposed to consider it as the Ultima Thule of his voyage, or a resting place whence he may start again for still more distant regions.”

Vigne, who wrote that over a hundred years ago, proved to be right. Kashmir has become “ the *sine qua non* of the oriental traveller ” and, under a government which can develop the country, it will indeed become a jewel of Asia.

After Vigne, as the nineteenth century developed its roads, its faster transport and its exploration of the world, the travellers to Kashmir increased in numbers, as did the books they wrote about their journeys. These travellers were of all kinds, learned, flippant, brilliant, dull, acquisitive, generous ; they filled books with their opinions about Kashmiri character. They wrote lies and truths about legends, the “ price of a Shikra-ride ”, the excellence of carving or the

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cruelty or stupidity of a governor. Some had axes to grind, some burned with radical fire, a few were non-committal, many spent hundreds of pages of print in trying to convey an idea of the glory and colour of a Kashmire sunset, the beauty of a chinar tree, or the cunning of some vendor of wonderful artistry or useless trash.

There were, however, Sir Walter Lawrence and Sir Aurel Stein to keep the balance. Scholars and able men, they looked deeper than some of their shorter-sighted brethren and, when Lawrence saw a flaw in the character of the Kashmiri, he was able to say why and let the reader know that these things were not peculiar to Kashmir. For instance, he wrote :

"The Kashmiri can turn his hand to anything. He is an excellent cultivator when he is working for himself. He is a good gardener, and has a considerable knowledge of horticulture. He can weave excellent woolen cloth, and, can make first-rate baskets. He can build himself a house, can make his own sandals, and make his own ropes. There is scarcely a thing which he cannot do, and as there are no middlemen like the Banyas of India, the Kashmiri is his own man of business. He understands profits and loss, and does not often make a bad bargain. He is, of course, like all orientals, conservative, and does not accept very readily crude suggestions regarding reforms in agriculture. I have at last induced them to cut down thistles, though the conservative party urged that the young thistles were an extremely pleasant vegetable in the spring. The Kashmiri can quote in support of his system of agriculture, and indeed in support of every act of his everyday life, some rhyming proverb, and he is essentially a man of routine. Everything in their lives, ploughing, sowing sheep-shearing, etc., has its proper time, and the time is determined by the day on which the sun enters Aries and spring commences (the Nauroz) and the day on which the sun enters Libra (the Mezan) and the autumn begins.

"In his home life the Kashmiri cultivator is at his best. He is kind to his wife and children, and one rarely hears of divorce scandals or immorality among the villagers. A woman who has behaved badly is a marked character in the country, and public opinion is always against her. The husband sometimes chastises his wife, and the men talk somewhat boastfully of the necessity for maintaining discipline in their houses. But as a matter of fact the wife, both in Musalman and Hindu houses, is all-powerful, and believe

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that, as a rule, the Kashmiri lives in awe of his consort. The Kashmiri wife is a real helpmate, and joint work and joint interests give rise to a camaraderie between man and wife which is very healthy. I have often come across a woman in some deserted spot singing a wailing song for a husband dead long since. The cultivators look down upon the boatmen and will not intermarry with them, as they consider them lax in the matter of morality. But, though kind to his own family, the Kashmiri is not always hospitable to his neighbours, and though generous enough to strangers, I have known many instances where he showed a lamentable want of charity."

Going on to explain this and the reasons for a lack of community feeling in the villages at that time (1890 A.D.), Lawrence cites something of the miserable Kashmiri history :

"It is a curious and melancholy state of things, but the reasons are not far to seek... Briefly, the Kashmiri cultivators have hitherto been treated as serfs, and have literally been forced to cultivate. They had no interest in their land, and were liable at any moment to be called away to work for officials or men of influence. They became absolutely hopeless and sullen, and each man played for his own hand. If they had combined, their condition might have been happier. This sullen temper is one of the worst points in the Kashmiri character, and, joined to deep-rooted apathy, makes it very difficult to improve the condition of the people. It is said, and with some truth, that, even if bidden to a feast, the Kashmiri will not go unless he is forced; and when urgent work is necessary to prevent some disaster to the crops, the villagers themselves say, 'we do not want pay, but we want the slipper,' this being their phrase for compulsion. Crime is almost unknown in the villages. Property is absolutely safe, and I have never heard of such a thing as the theft of crops. Offences against the person are extremely rare, and when Kashmiris quarrel they call one another by bad names, and will occasionally go so far as to knock off a turban or seize an adversary by his effeminate gown. The sight of blood is abhorrent to them...

"In many respects the Kashmiri cultivator resembles the Irishman as described by Lever. He certainly possesses the quick wit which is so characteristic of the Irish, and has a deep-rooted objection to paying rent. There are many points of resemblance between Ireland and Kashmir. Both are small countries which have suffered or derived benefit from the rule and protection of more powerful nations, yet have never welcomed any change or improvement. Both Kashmiris and Irish love a joke, are fond of harmless deception, and are masters of good-humoured blarney. Both have

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the same disregard for the first principles of sanitation, though the interior of the Kashmiri hut is probably cleaner than that of a similar type of dwelling in Ireland."

Lawrence, who had spent some years among the Kashmiri villagers, can be described as a truly objective and kindly personality. His name is a legend in the villages of Kashmir, where he is spoken of today as "Laren".

It was Frederick Drew, F.R.G.S., F.G.S., who first wrote in some detail of the geographical history of Kashmir. His book, "The Jummoo and Kashmir Territories", was published in 1875. He says :

"The observations of nearly every traveller to Kashmir have tended to show that the Vale was in late geological times completely occupied by a lake. The traditions of the natives—traditions that can be historically traced as having existed for ages—tend in the same direction and these have usually been considered to corroborate the conclusions drawn from the observed phenomena. Agreeing, as I do, with the conclusions, I cannot count the traditions as perceptibly strengthening it ; I have little doubt that they themselves originated in the same physical evidence that later travellers have examined ; they do not therefore afford independent support to the theory, but are valuable rather as showing how in early times some races of mankind had learnt to interpret aright the geological records of the history of their dwelling place.

"The existence of a lake over the whole valley of Kashmir occurred at no remote time, speaking by a geological standard, but it was long enough ago to have preceded any of the monuments of man that have yet been discovered.

He goes on to say :

"There is no good evidence that any depth of lacustrine deposit has been formed round buildings or other works of man, although certain changes as to a level of water may have taken place in his time. Thus at Manas Bal there is a temple partly submerged beneath the water of that lake. I am not clear about the cause of this submergence, nor, indeed, as to the origin of the lake itself, which, though seemingly resting on alluvium only, has a depth of 47 feet, at all events; it may be that the rise of the waters over the base of the temple is due to the supply of water brought by the later-made artificial canals not having been able to drain off to the river, except after a general rise of the lake. Some buried ruins and broken pottery at Avantipur (on the Jhelum, above Srinagar, 15 miles from it by land) have

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been brought forward to prove that somewhat important physical changes have taken place since the occupation of the valley by civilised man. An examination of these did not at all convince my mind of this. I saw nothing that might not have been produced by disintegration of the substance of the ruined buildings, deposition, perhaps, of flood-alluvium, and accumulation of rain wash from the hillside near."

The geologists had discovered Kashmir. There were the legends of the people, gods, demons and giant birds, all of whom had played their part in the formation of the ancient history of the Valley. The geologists reached past the legends and sought for their clues in sand and mud. Writing on this subject, Drew tells us :

"There is another set of phenomena which, if one understood their whole bearings, would throw light on the later geological history of Kashmir..... Major Godwin-Austin has described some strata that occur at Hirpur ; they are beds of conglomerate, sand, and loam ; they dip down towards the vale at an angle of 20° or more. Major Godwin-Austin observed a thickness of several hundred feet, and found in these many species of land and fresh water shells, with plants and minute fish scales. I believe that these same beds occur at many places from Hirpur to Baramulla, between the old rock of the mountains and the material of the *karewas* proper. More full and minute observation of them is required than has yet been made, before one can reason on what they may prove. They lead us back to an earlier part of history than I intended to speak of ; my object in mentioning them is simply to draw attention to their occurrence, in the hope that other travellers may be able to work out their meaning."

Following Godwin-Austin and Drew, came D.R. Oldham who, in his "Manual of the Geology of India", commented on Godwin-Austin's findings :

"It is very probable", he wrote, "that some of the finely-bedded fine-grained deposits described by Colonel Godwin-Austin were deposited in still water, but the frequent alterations of beds of shingle with sand and layers of lignite, from one to three inches in thickness, point to sub-aerial conditions of formation. Even the presence of true lacustrine deposits does not prove that the whole of the Kashmir lake basin was ever occupied by a lake. This rock basin was probably gradually formed by a deformation of the earth's crust, and the hollow so produced was filled up almost, if not quite,

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as soon as formed. At the present day true lacustrine deposits are being formed in those places on the northern limit of the valley where, owing to a deficiency of deposition, hollows have been left in which water has accumulated, and it is probable that the conditions have been much the same as at present, throughout the geological history of the Kashmir valley, and that a minor area of true lacustrine deposits has been accompanied by a greater area where sub-aerial accumulation of sediment has been in progress."

Oldham was writing in 1893, when new views of the world's physical history were in the forming. The explosion caused by the theories of Darwin was still echoing in men's minds and the theories as to the world's age, sanctified by ecclesiastical seal, were being shifted from their foundations. Men with small hammers, chipping rocks in obscure places, were cracking the frame-work in which the human mind had willingly confined itself for thousands of years. The legends of Kashmir's origin were easier for a remote villager to believe and much more colourful too, but the men with the small hammers, and the tweezers with which they picked up fossils millions of years old, went on with their work.

They looked, too, to the minerals and other hidden treasures. Sir Walter Lawrence, writing in 1895, spoke of the possibilities of Kashmir's mineral wealth :

"Although there has been no organised exploration, Mr. Lydekker is of opinion that the Kashmir Himalaya is not likely to be an important producer of the precious metals. But the chance discovery of valuable sapphires in the Padar country in 1882 leads one to hope that other sources of mineral wealth may still be found in the territories of His Highness The Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, and I do not think that in a State like Kashmir it is correct to infer that the natives of the country would be prompt to disclose the existence of rich lodes, or that they would prove energetic miners. The people are engaged in agricultural or pastoral pursuits, and their experience in the past teaches them that the discovery of mineral wealth is attended with drawbacks in the shape of forced labour and the presence of a large number of officials who have to be fed."

How right the Kashmiris were in assessing such drawbacks as those mentioned by Sir Walter Lawrence may be gathered from the following description of forced labour given by him

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later in his book, "The Valley of Kashmir". He tells of the forced labour used for transportation of stores to Gilgit, a frontier post in the mountains :

" Gilgit to the Kashmiri is a constant terror and when it was rumoured that transport was wanted to convey the baggage of the troops going to or coming from Gilgit, there was a general stampede among the villagers. I have seen whole villages bivouacking on the mountains when the agents for the collection of transport arrived in their tehsil, and I have seen inhuman punishment dealt out to men who demurred to leaving their homes for two or three months with the prospect of death from cold or starvation. I have seen villagers maimed from frostbite or shrivelled and paralysed from exposure to cold, and it is no marvel that the Kashmiris should loathe the very name of Gilgit."

And, as to "the large number of officials who have to be fed", the Kashmiri had reason to keep that in mind again, where the discovery of mineral wealth was concerned, for as Lawrence says :

" The other side of *Begar* (forced labour) is also a great trouble to the villagers, but it has been easier to abolish. It consists of requisitions for village produce, and is a form of purveyance on behalf of officials. Under this system officials would obtain wood, grass, milk, poultry and grain, blankets and an occasional pony, cows and sheep free of cost, and higher officials would build houses in the city or cultivate waste land through the unpaid labour of the villagers."

Writing in 1895, of the possible discovery of mineral wealth, Lawrence was then perhaps right in attributing to the Kashmiri villager a suspicion as to what this mineral wealth might entail for him.

Conjecture as to what the exploitation of Kashmir's mineral deposits might do in shaping the country's future is still rife. To-day the Kashmiris would welcome it. In a later chapter there is a discussion of this subject of mineral deposits.

As time passed and the new century began, it was easier for the visitor to reach Kashmir. Still arduous in a way, the journey became a commonplace by the end of the first world

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war. Publications about Kashmir grew. These provided different patterns : sugar-sweet, bitter and balanced, sentimental at times to the point of nausea, sometimes profound, but all affected by one thing—the scenic beauty of Kashmir. It caught them all.

Younghusband, one of the greatest travellers and explorers of Central Asia, first visited Kashmir in 1887. In his book "Kashmir", he wrote of the local beauty spots of Srinagar and the Valley, or of the great passes in the surrounding Himalayas, with the same pleasure :

"There is a large choice of expeditions from Srinagar to points of interest . . . First in the immediate vicinity there are picnics to be made to the Dal Lake, to the two Moghal gardens—the Nishat Bagh and the Shalimar Bagh—and to the beautiful camping ground of the Nasim Bagh. These are expeditions which can be made in a single afternoon if necessary. Of more remote tours the favourites are: up the river to Islamabad and the beautiful Achibal spring and garden; to the clear springs of Vernag, one of the many sources of the Jhelum; to the famous ruins of Martand which occupy the grandest site of any in the world for a temple; to the Lidar valley, Pahalgam, the Kolahoi glacier, and the caves of Amarnath. . . .

"Down the river are equally delightful tours to be made. At Shadipur, at the junction of the Sindh River with the Jhelum River, there is a charming grassy camping-ground under chenar trees. Ganderbal is a few miles higher up the Sindh River, and forms the base for expeditions to (1) the Wangat ruins and the Gangabol lake, an exquisite turquoise-coloured sheet of water reposing immediately beneath the great cliff and glaciers of the Haramokh mountain; and (2) the beautiful Sindh Valley with its grand mountain scenery, and the charming camping-ground of Sonamarg (the golden meadow) also under towering mountain masses and close to glaciers. Up this valley also lies the road to the Zojila Pass on the far side of which branch off roads to Baltistan, on the one hand, with its fine ibex-shooting ground, immense glacier region, and K2, the second highest mountain in the world; and on the other to Ladak with its Buddhist monasteries perched on any inaccessible rocky pinnacle that can be found, and Leh, the meeting place of caravans from Lhasa and from Central Asia—a most quaint and picturesque little town embedded among bare, sun-baked mountains which have been the starting-point of two journeys I have made across the dreary, lofty Karakoram Pass (18,500 feet) to Turkestan and the Pamirs."

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Just as Bernier, three centuries earlier, had described the sweet relief of arrival in the Kashmir Valley after the journey from the blazing Indian plains, so Younghusband tells how the Valley feels to the traveller who has descended from the great frozen ranges of Central Asia :

"It is impossible to convey the delicious sense of relief the traveller feels in descending from the Pass, in leaving behind all the rigours of severe mountain travel and intense cold, and with each easy step downward feeling the air growing warmer and warmer, and at length, reaching the lake, throwing himself into an armchair in a comfortable house-boat, and then gliding smoothly over the placid lake with the evening sunlight flooding the beautiful valley, and a soothing sense suffusing him at difficulties surmounted, at hardships past, and at pleasant relaxation of body, mind and purpose."

In 1916 Jawaharlal Nehru spent some weeks in the mountains of Kashmir. In his "Autobiography", he gives the reader some impressions of his travels there :

"This was my first experience of the narrow and lonely valley, high up in the world, which lead to the Tibetan plateau. From the top of the Zojila Pass we saw the rich verdant mountain side below us on one side and the bare bleak rock on the other. We went up and up the narrow valley bottom, flanked on each side by mountains, with the snow-covered tops gleaming on one side and little glaciers creeping down to meet us. The wind was cold and bitter but the sun was warm in the day time, and the air was so clear that often we were misled about the distance of objects, thinking them much nearer than they actually were. The loneliness grew; there were not even trees or vegetation to keep us company—only the bare rock and the snow and ice and, sometimes, very welcome flowers. Yet I found a strange satisfaction in these wild and desolate haunts of nature; I was full of energy and a feeling of exaltation.

"I had an exciting experience during this visit. At one place on our march beyond the Zojila Pass—I think it was called Matayan—we were told that the cave of Amarnath was only eight miles away. It was true that an enormous mountain, all covered with ice and snow, lay in between and had to be crossed, but what did that matter? Eight miles seemed so little. In our enthusiasm and inexperience we decided to make the attempt. So we left our camp (which was situated at about 11,500 feet altitude) and with a small party went up the mountain. We had a local shepherd for a guide.

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"We crossed and climbed several glaciers, roping ourselves up, and our troubles increased and breathing became a little difficult. Some of our porters, lightly laden though they were, began to bring up blood. It began to snow and the glaciers became terribly slippery; we were fagged out and every step meant a special effort. But still we persisted in our foolhardy attempt. We had left our camp at four in the morning and after twelve hours' almost continual climbing we were rewarded by the sight of a huge ice-field. This was a magnificent sight, surrounded as it was by snow peaks, like a diadem or an amphitheatre of the gods. But fresh snow and mists soon hid the sight from us. I do not know what our altitude was but I think it must have been about 15,000 to 16,000 feet, as we were considerably higher than the cave of Amarnath. We had now to cross this ice-field, a distance probably of half a mile, and then go down on the other side to the cave. We thought that as the climbing was over, our principal difficulties had also been surmounted, and so, very tired but in good humour, we began this stage of the journey. It was a tricky business as there were many crevasses and the fresh snow often covered a dangerous spot. It was this fresh snow that almost proved to be my undoing, for I stepped upon it and it gave way and down I went into a huge and yawning crevasse. It was a tremendous fissure and anything that went right down it could be assured of safe keeping and preservation for some geological ages. But the rope held and I clutched to the side of the crevasse and was pulled up. We were shaken up by this but still we persisted in going on. The crevasses, however, increased in number and width and we had no equipment or means of crossing some of them. And so at last we turned back, weary and disappointed, and the cave of Amarnath remained unvisited."

Joshua Duke, a surgeon resident in Kashmir, wrote in 1904 a valuable "Kashmir Handbook" in which, after describing the route to Amarnath, he writes that :

"The scenery on the marches and near Amarnath is magnificent in favourable weather. A friend writes to me—'The scenery is wild, grand and more imposing than anything I have seen in Kashmir. It is the trip to make. I shall never forget it. One felt in the presence of the Maker of the Universe'."

After the first world war travellers in Kashmir grew more numerous. They wrote many books about the country, some trite, some moving, but all seeking to describe the beauties of the scenery and the climate. It seems that no one leaves Kashmir unaffected by its strange charm and peace. When Kashmiris leave their country, they grieve until they can return.

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They love travel and adventure, but they must return to their country. Whether he be a Mohammedan, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist or Christian, he loves the common tongue and sentiment, and his country's beauty, be it in cruel winter or the tender summer.

Travellers will always come to Kashmir. Many will write books about it. In a way, they attempt to describe Heaven when they write of its mountains, lakes and gardens, which is understandable in any traveller who tastes Heaven, even on earth.

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JAMMU and Kashmir, with its area of 84,471 square miles, is the home of various races and sects whose history goes back thousands of years. Many are the strange and interesting customs and social usages prevailing among them and any detailed account of their history would fill a volume. It would have to take into consideration ethnic and physical factors such as the diversity of race and religion, and the influence upon the peoples' development of the vast mountain barriers and the network of rivers and hill-torrents cutting one part of the country off from another and tending to restrict mutual intercourse and confining the various population groups within limited and isolated areas. In the present chapter only a bird's-eye view of the major sections of the population is possible.

The hilly tract extending to the plains of the Punjab from the snowy mountains bounding the Kashmir Valley on the south is called Dugar. It is the home of the Dogras, a hardy people divided into several castes and sects, both Hindu and Musalman. Belonging to the Aryan race, they speak the Dogri language, a mixture of Sanskrit, Punjabi and Persian words, deriving its origin from the Indo-Aryan branch of Sanskrit.

There are numerous sub-castes among the Dogra population of Jammu, the salient feature of all being the hardness of the people. Their staple food is rice, wheat and pulses. The observance of common festivals like Basant, Nauroz, Sair and Dusserah testifies to an extraordinary spirit of tolerance and goodwill amongst both the Hindu and Muslim Dogras, as well as the members of other castes. They dress in a short coat or freely-flowing shirt, with pyjamas loose to the knees and tight-fitting downwards. The men generally wear a light

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turban and tie a *kamarband* at the waist. The women dress in a tight-fitting bodice or jumper with pyjamas similar to those of their menfolk and a shawl or a *duppata* thrown over the head.

The Brahmans of the Jammu province depend upon agriculture which provides the main source of their income and the calling of religious ministers and priests is confined to a comparatively small number of families. It is strange in this part of India to behold Brahmans holding a position economically inferior to that of the Kshtrayas, most of them being tenants-at-will of the Rajput landlords. They are a peace-loving people and have always borne the hardships of life with a cheerful disposition. They have been greatly benefited by the Land Reforms Act of the present Government.

The Dogra Rajputs are not tall men; their average height being five feet four. Of slim build, they have somewhat high shoulders and curiously bowed legs and, though not muscular, are active and untiring. The colour of their complexion is a light shade of brown, rather darker than the husk of the almond. The women because of their less exposure have a brighter tint. They possess well-formed features, composed of a slightly hooked nose, well-shaped mouth and small brown eyes.

In character the Rajputs are simple and child-like. They cling to their prejudices; and the clan spirit, so common among mountain folk throughout the world, persists among them in the hard and fast rules of the *Biradari* system. They can endure long marches and stand the cold climate very well. Among the Muslim Rajputs, the Chibbalis and the Sudans are the chief sects. They also are a brave people and make the army their profession.

Khatris and Mahajans form the backbone of trade and commerce in the Jammu province. They are less good-looking than the Rajputs and less inured to physical hardship.

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But they are men of judgment, and literacy has made great progress among both men and women.

The working Rajputs and Thakkars follow agricultural pursuits. They are backward in education and loathe even to improve their farming methods.

Lastly, there is the class of Harijans called Meghs, Chamars and Dums. They form a more than fair proportion of the population of Jammu and have undergone numerous disabilities, civic and religious, at the hands of the high-caste Hindus. The levelling influence of education, which engenders tolerance and fellow-feeling, has, however, paved the way for a steady improvement of their social status. There are several interesting theories regarding the origin of the Meghs. According to one, they were originally Khatryas but, in order to escape destruction at the hands of Paras Ram Brahman of the Ramayana period, they adopted the profession of weaving and called themselves Meghs. Another theory holds that their progenitors were Brahmans but a cow once died in the house of one of them and, there being nobody to remove the carcase, this odious task was undertaken by a member of the caste who was subsequently expelled from the community. Others also suffered a similar fate for one reason or another and the expelled individuals came to form the separate caste of Meghs.

The Harijans are a community with clean habits and mostly follow the calling of agriculture. Only a few are cobblers or scavengers. With the spread of education, they will rise.

Between the outer districts and the borders of the Kashmir Valley is a hilly country inhabited by a virile and active people called the Paharis. Hardy and of powerful frame, they lead a rough life, eking out a sustenance by terrace cultivation on the slopes of barren hills. Poor communications with the outside world and between the different villages (this being due to the difficulties of the terrain) have served to keep them poor. The language they speak is a mixture

of Hindi, Punjabi, Dogri and Sanskrit words. They dress in grey woollen coats with *kamarband*, and wear loose pyjamas. The women are clad in long gowns tied with a *kamarband*, their attire being completed by a cap and shawl. Into this region have come the Kashmiris as settlers, inhabiting large tracts of the country and adopting the same dress. A mixture of the Pahari and the Kashmiri languages is spoken by them.

Another interesting hill people are the Gujjars. The climate and pasture of certain altitudes are favourable for rearing cattle and sheep and from ancient times the Gujjars and their neighbours, the Gaddis, have been breeders. They lead semi-nomadic lives, moving in summer with their herds and flocks from the warm regions of Jammu. They are then to be found in parts of Kashmir, building their flat-topped houses on seemingly inaccessible heights and being everywhere perfectly at home with their animals. They are said to be Rajputs who migrated from Rajasthan and adopted the Muslim faith. Their language, Gujjari, is now definitely recognised to be a form of Rajasthani. Their outdoor life spent in some of the healthiest parts of the country, and their nourishing diet of bread made from corn with milk and butter as other constituents of their daily food, result in their being a long-lived people. They are a fine tall race, with a decidedly Jewish cast of features. Their good faith is proverbial and they are generously disposed. Fairly well represented in most parts of Jammu and Kashmir, they muster strong in Poonch, Riasi and Muzaffarabad districts.

Kashmir Valley

The true people of Kashmir Valley are physically a fine race, the men being tall and well-built. They are an ancient race with complexions varying from olive to a ruddy and fair hue. The features of all are well-shaped and regular. Lively and intelligent, the people of the Valley are full of fun and fond of amusement. The beauty of their women has been long and much extolled.

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Numerous explanations, some of them verging upon the fantastic, have been advanced to account for their origin. For example, one theory puts them down as being descendants of one of the lost tribes of Israel, this perhaps being suggested by the Jewish cut of features to be found among some of the older people who look the patriarchal type. The following note by Alberuni almost clinches the matter:

"They (Kashmiris) used to allow one or two foreigners to enter their country, particularly Jews, but at present they do not allow any Hindu whom they do not know personally to enter, much less other people."

According to the legend, as mentioned in the *Rajatarangini* and the *Nilamatpurana*, the Valley which was a vast mountain lake was drained by Kashyapa Rishi who imported Brahmans and sages from India to live here. In those pre-historic days, it is said, tribes of *Pishachas* and *Yakshas* were living here. They used to give trouble to these Brahmans, who in order to escape their wrath followed the instructions of the author of the *Nilamatpurana* of giving presents of food etc. to them off and on to win their friendship. The festival of *Khichiamavas* is still observed by the Kashmiri Brahmans on the 15th day of the dark fortnight of Poh (Dec.-Jan.) when *Khichri* is cooked in every house and kept outside in new earthen pots as present to the *Pishachas* and *Yakshas*.

The student of *Rajatarangini* will have no hesitation to admit that before the advent of Islam in the 14th century, the population of Kashmir was not entirely Brahman. We find the names of several sects namely *Nishads*, *Khashas*, *Dards*, *Bhuttas*, *Bhikshas*, *Damras*, *Tantrins*, etc. who constantly gave trouble not only to the rulers of the country but also to the Brahmans. How and wherefrom they came is a long study in itself. That the Kashmiris form a branch of the race which brought the languages of Indo-Aryan type into India, is a fact established by the evidence of their language and physical appearance. But the period of their immigration and the route they came by are still moot points among

the authorities on the subject. Suffice it to say that they have till now preserved a distinct form of culture and in ancient times produced a civilisation which would have made a greater mark in the world's history, had there been a possibility of better and easier intercourse with the rest of the world.

Yet during the long and chequered history of Kashmir, there have been periods when the people came into contact with the Indian, Roman, Greek and Persian civilisations resulting in a happy blending of cultures at once tolerant and sympathetic towards the ideas and beliefs of others. The Kashmiris demonstrated it practically. When for instance, Brahmanism replaced the earliest forms of Naga worship there was the least tinge of religious persecution. On the other hand the Nagas are even to this day venerated by the general populace in the various springs. Buddhism came into ascendancy in the second century B.C. and in contrast to the religious feuds in the rest of India we find that Buddhist kings and ministers built *viharas* and temples dedicated to Hindu as well as to the Buddhist deities. And when Buddhism had its day, the change was marked by a conspicuous absence of force or bigotry. Similarly in the 14th century A.D. Islam entered Kashmir and as usual the broad-minded Kashmiris welcomed its exponent, the great Shah Hamadan, with open arms and the synthesis of Hindu and Islamic religious thought found its greatest exponents in Lalleshwari and Sheikh Nur-ud-Din who are even to this day venerated by Hindus and Muslims alike. During the darkest periods of religious persecutions by ignorant and fanatical foreigners, the people of Kashmir lived like brothers, giving what little solace, shelter and comfort they could, to their brothers in distress.

The Brahmins, popularly called Kashmiri Pandits, form a distinct class of their own and are considered to be the purest specimens of the ancient Aryan settlers in the Valley. During their numerous political vicissitudes they have suffered enormously at the hands of religious persecutors. Subse-

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quently, during the long and peaceful reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin most of them returned to their original home-land. They studied the Persian language and regained their traditional occupation, namely, government service, which was held by them throughout the later periods of Moghul, Pathan and Sikh rulers. The new-comers assumed the appellation of *Bhanmasi* in contradistinction to *Malmasi* which the indigenous inhabitants had assumed. The *Malmasis* observe the "lunar" and the *Bhanmasis* the "solar" form of astronomical calendar. They, however, have no restriction with regard to inter-marriage, etc. The *Karkuns* or government servants having given up the study of Sanskrit in favour of Persian, employed their daughters' eldest sons as their priests who were called *Bachibhats*. In course of time, the *Karkuns* and *Bachibhats* became two sub-castes, inter-marriage between the two being restricted. The Kashmiri Pandits are divided into 133 exogamous *gotras*, each member of which claims to be a descendant of a *rishi* whose name the *gotra* bears. Generally, the social position is determined by the nature of occupation followed, rather than by the *gotra*. Those who have been employed in superior state service since two or three generations hold their heads high above others.

Although claiming to be the offspring of *rishis* and belonging to the highest branch of Brahmans, the Saraswats, Kashmiri Pandits take meat freely in strange contrast to the observance of strict vegetarianism by the Brahmans all over India. This small community is highly advanced in education, more than 70% of their members being literate. Their chief occupation is government service. In India many well-known administrators and politicians have been Kashmiri Pandits. In the field of art, philosophy and literature, they have produced a galaxy of authors, savants and saints. They possess the knack of adapting to changed circumstances at short notice and during the present time are adopting new avenues of profession.

Sikhs are another small community. Before 1947 they were chiefly concentrated in the Muzaffarabad district. Recent

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developments have forced them to migrate to other parts of the State. Most of them were originally Brahmans imported by Raja Sukh Jiwan and were converted to Sikhism in the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. They are a hardy people and mostly agriculturists. Recently they have taken to the military and police service of the State.

An overwhelming majority of the people in the Valley professes Muslim religion. The advent of Islam during the 13th and the 14th centuries surely but slowly changed the social structure of the Kashmiris; but they maintained their traditions of love and tolerance. The influence of Islamic art from the directions of north and south is responsible for the development of the many industries for which Kashmir is famous; e.g. shawl, carpet, papier mache, wood-carving, etc. Zain-ul-Abidin is mainly responsible for the introduction of these arts from Samarkand and Bukhara, which were the centres of Islamic civilization then. Numerous Muslim saints and *derveshes* propagated their religion through the preachings of the purest and truest doctrines of Islam. They lived the religion in their lives of complete self-abnegation and tolerance to the ideas and beliefs of others. This considerably influenced the religious and philosophic thought of the Kashmiris who adopted the new order in greater numbers. The Persian language and literature, first introduced into Kashmir by Zain-ul-Abidin, further enriched the cultural treasures of Kashmir resulting in a synthesis of the Hindu and Muslim civilizations. Kashmiris attained a great proficiency in the new language and literature and produced eminent poets and scholars like Ghani, Sarfi, Fani, etc. In the development of Kashmiri painting, architecture, music and poetry, Muslims played a prominent part. The Hari Parbat fort and the bastion wall, the Jumma and Pathar Masjids, Pari Mahal and the world-famous Moghul Gardens are living testimonies to the outstanding contribution of Islam to the art and thought of the Kashmiris.

"The Musalmans of the Valley", says Lawrence, "may have retained for some time after their conversion to Islam, some of the

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Hindu customs of endogamy within the caste and exogamy outside the gotra, but there is no trace of these customs now and the different tribal names or *krams* are names and nothing more."

It is now possible for *Dar* to marry a girl of the *Ganai kram* and vice versa, provided both are agriculturists. The intermarriage among the low caste *wattals* or scavengers is still a taboo. There is, however, a sort of caste system prevalent, inasmuch as the members of one profession prefer to marry their sons and daughters among the followers of a similar profession. Thus it is very rarely that goldsmiths (*sonars*) and blacksmiths (*khars*) contract marriages among themselves. The old *krams* or nicknames of Pandit, Bhat, Dar, etc. are, however, still retained and new ones also added by reason of the special calling of the head of the family or any of his ancestors or because of such peculiar circumstances which may have occurred to him.

"For instance", says Pandit Anand Koul, "a man, named Wasdev, had a mulberry tree growing in his courtyard and, therefore, he was called Wasdev Tul (mulberry). He, in order to get rid of this nickname, cut down the tree. But a *mund* (trunk) remained and people began to call him Wasdev Mund. He then removed the trunk of the tree but its removal resulted in a *Khud* (depression) and henceforth people called him Wasdev Khud. He then filled up the depression but the ground became a *teng* (mound) and he was called thereupon Wasdev Teng. Thus exasperated he gave up any further attempt to remove the cause of his nickname and it continued to be *Teng* which is now attached to the names of his descendants."

The *Sheikhs*, *Sayyids* and *Pirzadas* are still considered to be *krams* of respectability among the Muslims. *Mullahs* or priests, though not numerous, are a class by themselves and every village has got a family or two to minister to the religious needs of the people and to officiate at the birth, marriage or death ceremonies. Recently they have taken to agriculture also ; but otherwise they live by the free gifts of grains bestowed on them by the villagers at harvest time.

The Muslim population of the Valley is divided into the

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Sunni and the Shia sects, the former being in a preponderating majority. In certain Tehsils and villages there is, however, a concentration of Shias. They have monopolised the papier mache trade and during the hey-day of the shawl industry they were the proprietors of shawl factories. Since there was an unbalanced economy between the shawl weavers who were generally Sunnis and the capitalists, numerous Shia-Sunni riots took place then, the interested parties lending a religious tinge to these.

There are some settlements of Pathans and Moghuls in certain parts of the Valley reminiscent of their rule ; but now they have been absorbed in the general population of the country, the appellation of *Khan* and *Sirdar* being only names.

The Bombas and Khakhas are the inhabitants of the Jhelum Valley below Baramulla. They were a source of constant terror to the Kashmiris till Maharaja Gulab Singh subdued them. They used to carry out marauding expeditions into the Valley and even now mothers quieten their crying children by saying that *Khakhas* have come. They now follow the peaceful avocations of agriculture and trade.

There are tribes like Dums and Galwans which were once considered inferior to others. They have now acquired wealth and their social status has risen. Wealth alone now commands position and poverty at once degrades a family.

Chaupans, the hereditary shepherds, who tend the sheep and cattle of the villagers during the summer months by taking them to green pastures on the various *margs* of high altitude, are a class of cheery, active men strictly marrying among themselves. They do not allow any outsider to usurp their hereditary calling. They have a most characteristic whistle and their healthy robust life in the high mountains makes them a lovable people except, of course, to their village clients who often have to be at their mercy with regard to the return of their sheep, etc. The Chaupans have some knowledge of simple herbs and bring them down for the poor villagers. In winter and early spring they live in the villages, where some-

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times they possess a little arable land. Just like the *Mullah* the Chaupans get their remuneration at the time of harvesting of crops in the shape of grains and cash.

The Bands or Bhagats correspond to the Mirasis in India and carry on the profession of singing and dancing and sometimes go in bands to perform short comic plays in different villages. They add piquancy and gaiety to the otherwise dull and monotonous life of the villagers and are in great demand on marriage and other festivals.

The people with whom the visitors to the Valley generally come in close contact are the hanjis or boatmen of Kashmir. They are an ancient race and the *Rajatarangini* often mentions the *Nishads* (boatmen) and boat bridges. Some claim Noah as their ancestor but it is generally believed that they were Khashtryas before their conversion to Islam. They still disdainfully refer to a novice at boatcraft as a Shudra. There are many classes of boatmen known according to the boat they ply and live in. The *bahts* (barge) boatmen have recently taken to timber and grain trades and with the rise in their standard of life have acquired a respectability over other hanjis. The doonga and houseboat hanji looks cleaner and can speak English and Hindustani fairly well. He is intelligent and at a very short notice can perform the duties of an accomplished butler or an expert cook, a seasoned shikari or an experienced guide. Most of the visitors owe their happy and trouble-free holiday in the Valley to the hanji, though he is more sinned against than sinning. There are other classes of hanjis, e.g., Dal hanji who carry the vegetables from the garden to the market and are considered the lowest. The Gari hanji are those who collect the singhara (water nut) from the Wular lake. The Gada hanji or fishermen are well-known for their close communal feelings and generally support their brothers in distress.

The hanjis are a strong and virile race with well-developed muscles. They live a hard life cramped up in one or two small rooms in the at of their boats. Their knowledge of boatcraft is excellent and it is a pleasure to watch them

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punting or towing their boats up through strong and swift currents of the river.

The Kashmiri language has now been placed by Dr. Grierson in the Dardic branch of non-Sanskritic languages in his "Linguistic Survey of India". This treatment of the Kashmiri language is opposed to the popular and local belief that Kashmiri was originally the language of Brahmans and has grown out of Sanskrit. There is no script of its own but the Kashmiri language has a vast store of rich proverbs, sayings and folklore. There are some epic poems rendered into Kashmiri, as well as a good number of lyric poems. Recently the Arabic script has been adapted for its use and Kashmiri literature is growing in quantity as well as in quality.

The dress of Kashmiris has often been criticised for being effeminate and conducive to lazy habits. It is a long loose gown buttoning at the neck and falling to the ankles. In winter it is made of wool and in summer of cotton. There is very little difference between the *phiran* worn by men and women. A pyjama of the loose type is generally worn under the *phiran* and this is all the dress of an average villager. The women wear a skull cap surrounded by a fillet of red colour in the case of Muslim and a fillet of white cloth in the case of Pandit women. A shawl or a white *chaddar* thrown gracefully over the head and shoulders, more as a protection from the sun than to hide the features, completes their headgear. Men wear a turban as a sign of respectability and affluence. It is commonly worn by the inhabitants of cities and big towns. The ordinary peasant is content with wearing the long pointed skull cap. In winter a *kangri* is taken under the *phiran* to keep oneself warm. It consists of an earthen jar of about six inches diameter covered with a basket of wickerwork. Charcoal cinders of a special type are put in it to give a constant and a continuous heat.

There is a story current among the Kashmiris that Emperor Akbar, enraged at the dogged resistance offered by the people of the Valley to his general, Qasim Khan, forced them to wear the effeminate *phiran* in order to degrade them.

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Otherwise it is said that before the advent of the Moghul rule they wore a short coat and trousers. A crusade launched against its use by patriotic Kashmiris has resulted in the change among certain classes to the graceful sari and shalwar, in the case of women, and coat and trousers in the case of men.

The staple food of the Kashmiris is rice. They take plenty of vegetables but the favourite dish is the *hak* or karam sag. In the cities mutton is consumed in large quantities but in the villages it is still a luxury reserved only for festive occasions. Although being inhabitants of a cold country, Kashmiris abhor the use of intoxicating drinks. They have, however, found a cheap and harmless alternative in tea which they take so often. Its preparation is also quite different, salt being used instead of sugar. Green tea leaves are boiled and to give it a pink colour a little soda bicarb is added. Every time is tea time in a Kashmiri home and the *samovar* is generally steaming throughout the day. It would be sheer discourtesy to allow even an odd visitor to leave the house without serving him with a hot piping cup of pink-coloured tea.

Having been a subject race for the last four hundred years, Kashmiris have been vilified by outsiders as cowards, liars and what not. That they displayed their military prowess in the times of Lalitaditya, Jayapida, Avantiverma and Zainul-Abidin and others is a matter of history. The way the Kashmiri defended his freedom and homeland against an unscrupulous enemy in 1947 has once for all buried this myth of his being a coward. Suffering untold miseries at the hands of his numerous Moghul, Pathan and Sikh masters he had to take shelter under subterfuge to save his and his family's honour and life.

"One cannot", says Lawrence, "help the thought that many races, had they lived through generations of oppression like the Kashmiris, might have been cunning and more dishonest."

Frontier Ilagas

To the north of the Valley is the region called Dardistan inhabited by broad-shouldered, moderately stout-built, well-

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proportioned and active mountaineers. They are not particularly handsome but have a good cast of countenance with hazel or brown eyes.

"The word 'Dard', says Sir George Grierson, "has a long history and the people bearing the name are a very ancient tribe who are spoken of in Sanskrit literature as Darada. The Greeks and the Romans included in the Dard country the whole mountainous tract between the Hindu Kush and the frontiers of India."

From their mountain fastnesses they have often led marauding expeditions into the Valley and Kalhana gives accounts of the various punitive measures taken against them by different kings of the country. Dr. Leitner who visited Dardistan in 1866 writes :

"Whether we judge from language or from physiognomy, the conclusion is inevitable that the Dards are an Aryan race."

Though intelligent and clever they are yet furious and easily provoked.

In view of its strategic position, this region has always been coveted by different powers on its borders. But the Dards managed to maintain their independent status till the middle of the last century when Maharaja Gulab Singh and his son, Maharaja Ranbir Singh, finally subjugated them. Before conversion to Islam, the Dards were followers of Buddhism and even to this day traces of Buddhist influences can be found in most of their customs and rituals. There are still some villages in the side valleys which follow the Buddhist religion. That the Kashmiri cultural influences extended to this region and beyond is now amply proved by the recent discovery in this part of the country of birch bark manuscripts in the Kashmiri Sharda script. They are the followers of the Sunni and Shia sects. The people of Hunza are followers of Ali Ilahi faith.

Chilasis are a Dard tribe inhabiting a long valley on the west of Nanga Parbat. They are notorious for their ferocity and until 1850 used to come round the flank of the mountainous Astore Valley to plunder and kill.

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The whole region of Dardistan is barren and except for small patches of vegetation near mountain torrents, little can be produced elsewhere. Wheat, barley and *grim* are grown and form the staple food of the people. It is always a deficit area in food and the Kashmir Government has to send every year huge quantities of grain to feed the population there. Fruits, particularly grapes, are grown in the Gilgit town proper.

Living as they do in a cold region, their dress is a woollen coat with a choga or a long coat thrown over the shoulders. The pyjamas are worn loose. The cap is a sort of deep bag with its sides rolled up and fitting the head closely.

A sort of a caste system is preserved among these people. There are five of them. (1) Rennu or the ruling caste ; (2) Shins, a religious sect : up to the 18th century, they used to cremate their dead in the Buddhist fashion, but now they bury them, keeping a fire alight while burying, in token of the former custom ; (3) Yashkun is the largest class of agriculturists ; (4) Kremin and (5) Dum are the lower castes carrying on the same duties as Shudras do in the Hindu society.

The region to the north-east of the Valley is called Balistian and is inhabited by a people of the Tibetan race called Baltis. Being situated in between Ladakh and Dardistan, there has been a mixture of the two races resulting in their being a little taller than the Ladakhis. Although the preponderant majority of the population profess the Muslim faith of the Shia sect, there are still some villages professing the Buddhist faith.

The Baltis are a people of good nature and great patience. Being of prolific nature owing to the prevailing custom of polygamy, they are forced to seek labour in far off places in India and Kashmir, their own land being too barren to support a larger population. They wear a short woollen coat and trousers and a small round cap. Kashmiris call their country *Tsera* (apricot) *Bhutan* from the abundance of apricots cultivated there and exported in a dry form to India.

Further to the east is the magic land of Ladakh or Little

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Tibet as it is sometimes called. It is the land of the ancient Bhauttas, religious followers of the Dalai Lama of Lhasa. They belong to the Tibetan race having a Turanian cast of features. Their cheek bones are high ; from them downwards the face rapidly narrows ; the chin is small and usually retreating. The peculiarity is of eyes of which the outer corners are drawn out and the upper eyelids are overhung by a fold of the skin. The nose is pressed, so to say, into the face and depressed at the bridge. Their stature is short, generally 5 ft. 2 in. in the case of men and 4 ft. 8 in. in the case of women. But what they lack in form is amply compensated by their cheerful disposition and frank and honest dealings. They are a guileless people and it is a joy to sit in their company and partake of their hearty laughter and hospitality. They are no doubt a dirty people, perhaps due to living in an extremely cold region of the world where to take a bath is a sore trial, but they are trustworthy and affectionate. They rarely quarrel or lose their tempers even when they might be under the influence of their national beverage—the Chhang. They are willing workers and are noted for carrying heavy loads across the high mountain passes. They are clad in long woollen coats of grey colour with broad girdles of blue, red or orange, and caps of various colours, red, blue, green or even black velvet with red lining. The women have a head-dress of red cloth covering also the neck and back and closely studded with turquoises, and brooches. On either side these are balanced by large earlaps of black fur. The poorer people wear long and thick black coats and trousers. Over all, long coats of goatskin are worn. Long boots of thick felt with a leather slipper for the sole are a peculiarity of this region.

The Ladakhis are divided into four principal castes, namely, (1) Gyalpo or Raja, (2) Jinak or officials, (3) Mungrik or cultivators and (4) Ringan or menials. The majority are cultivators. A Ladakhi village has always a small or a big Gompa or monastery according to its size. It is both a religious as well as a temporal institution, the Lama generally deciding various disputes of the villagers. In most cases

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much of the cultivable land belongs to the Gompa and the villagers are its tenants-at-will. Every Gompa maintains a number of monks and nuns presented to it by their parents in their childhood and dedicated for life to its service. Most of these monasteries are very rich and contain valuable collections of old manuscripts chiefly on the Buddhist religion.

The custom of polyandry common among the Buddhists in Ladakh, although tending to keep down the population, has a bad effect on the nature of women. The custom is an ancient one and was tolerated because of the barrenness of the country which is incapable of maintaining a large population. It also prevented the holdings from being frittered away by partitions. The eldest brother's wife was the joint wife of his two younger brothers next to himself in age. These two brothers were called Farsukhs or minor husbands. Should there be more than two brothers the others become *Magpas* by marrying a girl from outside and then inheriting her father's property. It was a consequence of the demand from educated Ladakhis that an Act to prohibit Polyandrous Marriages among Buddhists was passed in 1941.

The staple food of the Ladakhis is *grim* which is ground into flour and eaten mixed with tea and butter as a rough paste or in the form of bread. Although professing the Buddhist faith, the Ladakhis are meat-eaters. Being inhabitants of a cold country they drink a kind of country liquor called Chhang which is brewed from *grim*. With the opening of a regular air service to Leh and also a jeepable road, Ladakh is sure to prosper in the days to come.

LALITADITYA

(724-760 A.D.)

LALITADITYA is chiefly known to history as a great conqueror. He was a famous king of Kashmir. His reign of thirty-seven years was marked by exploits of conquest and many expeditions, for he was essentially a tireless warrior and a great conqueror. Like Alexander the Great, Lalitaditya had a desire for world conquest which could not be allayed, and Kalhana thus lays bare the king's ambitious mind in his words to his ministers.

"For rivers which have set out from their own region the ocean is the limit but nowhere is there a limit for those who are frankly aspiring to be conquerors."

Lalitaditya gave wide extent to his dominions. The Punjab, Kanauj, Tibet, Badakshan and other territories are said to have been brought into subjection by him. His attitude towards the subjugated kings and peoples was magnanimous and munificent ; and, though his prolonged wars of conquest like those of Alexander at times damped the enthusiasm of his war-weary soldiers, this brave General had the knack of enkindling it again. In this regard Kalhana writes :

"Though disliked by the Generals who were uneasy at the prolonged duration of the war the king thought highly of his demand of strict observance of forms ! "

Lalitaditya ushered in an era of national glory, prosperity and peace in the country. He was tolerant towards all schools of religious thought. Buddhism and Hinduism, the two prominent creeds of the time, received patronage at the hands of this Hindu ruler who constructed temples for the Buddha as well as for Shiva, Vishnu and other gods. The king liberally patronised men of letters and several *viharas* dedicated to the gods, where learning flourished a good deal, were set

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up. Kashmir became the synagogue of foreign scholars and many cultural missions set out from the country.

During his reign public services were re-organised. New buildings were constructed. Irrigational facilities were afforded to the cultivator and relief measures were adopted in times of unforeseen calamity. Charitable institutions, where the poor and the needy were fed everyday, were also set up. Many towns were founded during the reign of Lalitaditya. He built the world-famous Martand Temple, the Cyclops of the East, whose ruins testify to the splendour and massiveness with which the age moved. And so do the few remnants of ruins in Parihaspura, his capital city, point to the grandeur which it must have once commanded. The country was at the zenith of its glory.

Before giving any detailed account of Lalitaditya's various victories it would be better to know the political conditions of the times and the influence upon them of the countries immediately beyond the frontiers of the then kingdom.

The Chinese under the T'angs had slowly but gradually extended their dominions to the west and at about Durlaba Verdhana's time the Chinese Emperor Tai-Tsung had conquered Kucha, Khotan, Khorasan and Kashgar and had thus touched the very frontiers of Kashmir which had become the predominant power in the north of India and had reduced the kingdom of Taxila and the Salt Range (Simhapura) as well as the minor principalities of the lower hills to the rank of dependencies. Kashmir thus was in constant danger of Chinese aggression from the east and the north. Matters came to a head during Chandrapida's reign when the Chinese armies crossed into Baltistan and over-ran it. A few years before this King Chandrapida had sent an embassy to the Chinese Court for aid against the Arabs who were threatening his kingdom in the Kabul Valley and who were equally inimical to the Chinese. It is not known how Chandrapida's request was answered but it is recorded that about the year 720 A.D. he was granted the title of king on the Imperial roll. It might be because of the friendly relations with the Kashmir king that the

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Chinese armies desisted from crossing into Kashmir but it became increasingly clear that if the kingdom had to survive it must guard against a further Chinese incursion by trying to bring the trans-Himalayan territories of Central Asia under the direct rule of the Kashmir king.

Towards the south, Kashmir territories were in close proximity to the kingdom of Kanauj, which under Harshavardana had acquired extensive territories and fame. During Lalitaditya's reign Kanauj was ruled by Yasoverman but due to internal feuds it seems the kingdom had lost much of its power and influence.

It is thus clear that a powerful ruler of Kashmir could command the respect of the kingdoms of the south as well as of the north. And Kashmir was fortunate enough to find a great leader in the person of Lalitaditya Muktapida.

The *Rajatarangini* is silent about the early life of Lalitaditya, but it can easily be concluded that being the youngest of the three sons of King Durlabhaka, he must have undergone a thorough schooling in the art of statecraft under his father and his two brothers. He had already seen a great contrasting rule of his immediate predecessor and it must have brought home to him the lesson of such a suicidal policy for both the king and the people.

Kalhana mentions that his first expedition was towards the kingdom of Kanauj which at that time under Yasoverman could not make any resistance to the brave armies of Lalitaditya. It seems that his army was mainly recruited from the north and most of his generals, including his commander-in-chief, Cankunya, also came from the same region. It appears that due to the decline of the T'ang rule, the Kashmir ruler attracted many an adventurer and Lalitaditya was not slow in taking advantage of their experience and martial abilities. For instance, it is clear that Cankunya must have acquired fame as a military commander even before he joined the services of Lalitaditya since he bore the Chinese title of Cankium-General.

The political conditions of north-western India at that time seem to have been too obscure to permit a guess as to the circumstances which would account for hostilities between the rulers of Kashmir and distant Kanauj. However, it can easily be presumed that Lalitaditya had already under him the territories composed of the districts of Kangra and the province of the Punjab. When Lalitaditya led his great army across the fertile plains of the Punjab, it is recorded that the entire population submitted to his rule gladly and without any resistance. Yasoverman at first submitted peacefully but during the drafting of the final treaty a hitch was created when hostilities were resumed and he was dethroned and the whole territory brought under the direct rule of the Kashmir king.

After this victory Kalhana mentions that Lalitaditya went on a tour of conquest (Digvijay) and is said to have subdued the entire kingdom of Gaudas (Bengal), and the southern territories of India including the seven Konkans. On the west he is said to have subdued the entire territory up to Dwarka.

Excepting the defeat of Yasoverman there is no independent evidence to prove these claims of Kalhana. From the Chronicle itself, however, it can be deduced that his conquest of the Gauda territory is not entirely mythical inasmuch as the Gauda princes who were living in Kashmir as hostages were assassinated by Lalitaditya for which gross violation of the rules of war and humanity Kalhana takes Lalitaditya severely to task.

After gaining these outstanding victories in the south, Lalitaditya turned his attention to the territories bordering on the north of Kashmir. As mentioned, his kingdom extended to the farthest point in the Karakoram Range controlling the overland caravan routes from India to China. We know that Arab invasion was threatening the Kabul Valley already from the commencement of the 8th Century and that simultaneously the Mohammedan power in Sind was making efforts to advance northwards. While the Sahi rule in Kabul and Gandhara was exposed to these attacks, Lalitaditya may well have

found an opportunity to extend his authority in the direction of the Indus. He led a victorious army through the Dard Desha (Dardistan) to the Tukhara country (Tukharistan of the later historians). The whole region was then thoroughly imbued with the Kashmiri traditions and learning, thanks to the efforts of the numerous Kashmiri monks and the Kashmiri settlements in the different Central Asian cities. It cannot, therefore, be difficult to understand that the Kashmiri armies under Lalitaditya gained an easy victory there. The Chinese Empire, moreover, was falling to pieces due to the end of the T'ang rule and the internal civil wars and dissensions.

At about this time there is evidence to show, the Tibetans had acquired sufficient power to be capable of aggression towards the west and the east. Lalitaditya, therefore, turned his forces against the Tibetans in Ladakh and beyond. Ladakh was easily brought under subjugation and many victories were also gained against the Tibetans. These victories were celebrated not only during the time of Lalitaditya but even long afterwards. Kalhana mentions that in his time the victories were annually celebrated and Alberuni mentions that the Kashmiris observed the second of Caitra as a day of Lalitaditya's victory over the Tibetans.

It was perhaps due to his intention to completely subjugate the Tibetans that Lalitaditya sent his famous embassy to the Chinese court. The Chinese Annals mention that U-li-to, the ambassador of Mo-to-pi (Muktapida), the king of Kashmir, came to the Chinese court to seek aid from the Emperor against the common enemy, the Tibetans. That Lalitaditya should have endeavoured to enlist the friendship of the powerful Chinese king, Yuen Tsun, is natural enough seeing that the Tibetan expansion threatened the Chinese kingdom too. U-li-to requested an alliance between the Chinese Emperor and Lalitaditya against the Tibetans and the despatch of a Chinese auxiliary force which was to encamp in the midst of his country on the shores of the Mahapadma lake (The Wular). He offered to find provisions for an army of 200,000 men and reported that in alliance with the king of Central India he had blocked all the

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five routes to Tibet. The Kashmirian envoy mentioned also the great success his king had achieved against the Tibetans in all his previous campaigns. But apart from receiving the embassy in a very courteous and hospitable manner the Chinese Emperor does not seem to have found his way to accepting the proposal, perhaps due to the fact that the Emperor was himself involved in quelling a rebellion raised by General Gan Lah-Shan, an officer of Turkish descent, in consequence of which he had ultimately to flee from his capital.

Lalitaditya had, therefore, to undertake the subjugation of the Tibetans all alone. The *Rajatarangini* mentions a few expeditions, but apart from the definite conclusion that Ladakh and some western provinces of Tibet were brought under the sway of the Kashmir king, the complete overthrow of the Tibetans is rather doubtful. But the adventuring spirit of Lalitaditya always led him into new countries and tight situations. Once he was lured into the sand deserts of Central Asia by the wily king of that country and his army being without water for a number of days was about to perish of thirst when accidentally a spring of fresh water was discovered which not only gave a new lease of life to him and his followers, but fanned his vindictive nature to punish the king.

The king, not being satisfied with his conquests, set out on new expeditions and in one of them certainly lost his life. Kalhana mentions two legends about his death which were current in his own time. Both of them agree in connecting it with a distant expedition to the north. According to one version, Lalitaditya perished through excessive snow in a country called Aryanaka (modern Iran). Another version made him end his life by suicide in order to escape being captured when separated from his army and blocked on a difficult mountain route.

The military exploits of Lalitaditya have naturally received greater prominence in the various accounts of his reign and have made him a hero to the Kashmiris of later periods. But his great works of architecture and public good and his intense love of learning, patronage of scholars and his great

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virtues as a humane conqueror are some of the qualities which should have, independent of his conquests, ranked him among the greatest kings of Kashmir.

The Valley had been till then subjected to constant floods due to the silting up of the bed of the river at Baramulla and Lalitaditya was the first king to realize that by cleaning the bed of rocks and silt, the flow of water would be quickened and thus the water level would fall in other parts of the Valley. He was thus the forerunner of the great engineer of Avantiverman, Suyya. Lalitaditya got the passage cleaned and thus vast areas of swamps were reclaimed for purposes of cultivation. Similarly he raised bunds round low-lying lands making them fit for growing crops. He also built numerous irrigation canals and Kalhana mentions that he erected water-wheels for taking up water to the Chakradara and other *karewas* for irrigation purposes. The cumulative effect of these works was that the production of crops increased adding greatly to the well-being and prosperity of the people.

Lalitaditya and his queens founded numerous towns. He built the towns of Suniscatapur and Darpitapur in commemoration of his foreign expeditions. There are, however, no traces of these towns extant now. He also built the two towns of Phalapura and Parontsa. The former may now be traced to a village near Shadipora and the latter is the town now called Punch, the capital of the illaqa of the same name. He is also credited with the founding of the town of Lalitapura (modern Letapur) at which place he built a large temple. At Hushkapura (modern Ushkur, the site of numerous archaeological excavations) he is said to have built a big *vihara* and a Buddhist temple. It may be mentioned that this *vihara* served as the resting place of a later Chinese traveller Ou'Kong who has given a very grand picture of it. Lalitaditya is also recorded to have founded a town at Lokpunya (modern Lokabhavan on the Anantnag-Verinag road). This town gained great importance as the headquarters of a group of feudal landlords (Damaras) in the later history of Kashmir. But the two outstanding constructions of Lalitaditya which have made

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his name immortal and added a lustre to the artistic and architectural abilities of Kashmiris are the temple of Martand and the city of Parihaspura.

"It is no longer possible", says Stein, "to trace with certainty the sites and remains of all the towns and structures which owed their existence to Lalitaditya. But those among them which can be identified justify by their extant ruins the great fame which Lalitaditya enjoyed as a builder. The ruins of the splendid temple of Martand which the king had constructed near the Tirtha of the same name, are still the most striking objects of ancient Hindu architecture in the Valley. Even in their present state of decay they command admiration both by their imposing dimensions and by the beauty of their architectural design and decoration."

Martand is rightly called the Cyclops of the East. Among the great architectural wonders of the world it occupies a very high place. It is not only typical Kashmir architecture at its best but is

"built on the most sublime site occupied by any building in the world—finer far than the site of the Parthenon, or of the Taj, or of St. Peters, or of the Escorial—we may take it as the representative or rather the culmination of all the rest and by it we must judge the Kashmir people at their best."

"On a perfectly open and even plain", says Young husband, "gently sloping away from a background of snowy mountains looking directly out on the entire length both of the smiling Kashmir Valley and of the snowy ranges which bound it—so situated in fact to be encircled by, yet not overwhelmed by, snowy mountains—stand the ruins of a temple second only to the Egyptians in massiveness and strength and to the Greeks in elegance and grace. It is built of immense rectilinear blocks of limestone, betraying strength and durability. Its outline and its details are bold, simple and impressive. And any overweighing sense of massiveness is relieved by the elegance of the surrounding colonnade of graceful Greek-like pillars. It is but a ruin now, but yet, with the other ruins so numerous in the Valley and similar in their main characteristics, it denotes the former presence in Kashmir of a people worthy of study. No one without an eye for natural beauty would have chosen that special site for the construction of a temple and no one with an inclination to the ephemeral and transient would have built it on so massive and enduring a scale."

An even more impressive proof of the grand scale on which Lalitaditya's building operations were conducted, is

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afforded by the remains marking the site of the city of Parihaspura near the present Shadipur. It is a *karewa* just opposite the junction of the Sindh river with the Jhelum, high and dry above all floods and marshes. And it stands well away from the mountain ranges on either hand, right out in the centre of the Valley so that all the higher peaks and the complete circle of snowy mountains may be seen. A nobler site could not be found and the few ruins found there in 1892 by Stein are an ample proof of the massive nature of the great buildings that must have existed therein. "Kalhana describes at length the series of great temples built by the king at this town. The extensive, though much injured, ruins with which I was able to identify these structures at the site of Parihaspura, the present Paraspur, show sufficiently that Kalhana's account of their magnificence was not exaggerated".

After the reign of Lalitaditya, Parihaspura passed through many vicissitudes which explain the utter decay of the ruins therein. His son Vajraditya removed the royal residence from there and later the drainage operations of Suyya brought the confluence of Vitasta and Sindhu from Parihaspura to Shadipur which naturally affected the importance of the town. Sankarverman (883-901) used the materials of Parihaspura for building his new town at Pattan and Harsa (1089-1101) seized and melted some of the gold and silver images of the temples still existing therein. In the subsequent civil wars the whole town was burnt down.

Lalitaditya's greatness is depicted by his extreme sense of toleration to the religious beliefs of his subjects, and his generosity towards the peoples and kings subjugated by him. Although a follower of the Hindu religion, he showed equal respect to the Buddhists and founded many Buddhist monasteries and temples. His commander-in-chief was a Buddhist and so were many of the high officials. To talented persons of all nationalities he showed great respect and regard and being a patron of learning many of the famous learned men of India and other countries came to his court. He brought from Kanauj the two famous poets Bhavbhuti and

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Vakpatiraja after Yasoverman's defeat and gave them the honour and respect due to them by installing them in his capital in Kashmir. Kalhana, however, does not conceal the king's faults. He mentions that he often used to give foolish orders when under the influence of drink, e.g., his order to burn down the city of Praversena which luckily was not carried out by his wise ministers. Similarly he does not forgive him for his cruel murder of the hostage princes of Gauda.

The traditions of Lalitaditya were kept up by his grandson, Jayapida, but after him there followed a succession of weak-minded rulers until in the 9th Century Kashmir had another illustrious ruler in the person of Avantiverman.

The glorious reign of Lalitaditya served as a beacon light to the Kashmiris of later generations, particularly during the many depressing days of political subjugation. It worked as a balm to the deep wounds inflicted on their sense of self-respect and national prestige and served as a rock in a sea of distress to keep fast to their moorings. In the freer atmosphere of today Lalitaditya will infuse new blood of adventure and refinement into the veins of the rising generations and will induce them to push up their beloved land to equal if not greater heights of prosperity and national honour.

ZAIN-UL-ABIDIN

(1422-1474 A.D.)

THE chequered history of Kashmir covered and clouded with periods of political subjugation and isolation, has had intervals which may be called golden ages and periods of humanism. In Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin, one finds a counterpart of Lalitaditya, both of whom garnished the pages of history with their nation-building and cultural activities except, of course, the exploits of conquests and consolidation which stand to the credit of the latter only. For, the Sultan cannot claim to be a conqueror like Lalitaditya, but he certainly combined in himself all the attributes of a really benevolent ruler who rightly effected the economic and social transformation of the country. Among the Shah Miri Sultans of Kashmir, Zain-ul-Abidin was the one Sultan whose reign was a glorious period in the sense that the country made considerable progress in all spheres. The Sultan from the very outset of his rule set about undoing the wrongs caused by his predecessors who pursued the policy of religious persecution and intolerance. During the time of Sikandar (Zain-ul-Abidin's father), the Hindus suffered enormously through the persecutions of his minister, Siya Buth, a new convert to Muslim faith. They fled the country in great numbers and it is said that only eleven families remained in Kashmir.

Sikandar was succeeded by his son, Ali Shah, in 1417 A.D. Very little is known about his reign except that he appointed his brother Shahi Khan (later on Zain-ul-Abidin) to the post of prime minister and after sometime left for a pilgrimage to Mecca, leaving the kingdom to the care of Shahi Khan. After reaching Jammu, he changed his mind and returned to regain the throne with the help of the Raja of Jammu. Jonaraja, a contemporary historian records that Shahi Khan would have gladly handed back the kingdom to Ali Shah, but his returning

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with the forces of the Jammu Chief enraged him and he, therefore, put up a strong resistance, ultimately gaining a great victory and took Ali Shah prisoner. The final result was that the kingdom passed into the hands of Shahi Khan who assumed the sovereignty under the title of Zain-ul-Abidin (1422 A.D.).

With the accession of Zain-ul-Abidin to the throne of Kashmir, there opened up an era of glory and prosperity for the people of this land. "Possessed of a broad and tolerant outlook", says Pandit Anand Koul, "and dominated with a desire to benefit mankind, he ruled with such equity and justice and did so much to improve the material prosperity of the people that one cannot fail to admire him. His benevolent rule demands special homage inasmuch as he lived at a period when he had no worthy and enlightened contemporary to emulate. In the world around him he could have found little to help him. He was a potentate encouraged to be tyrannical and selfish by tradition, and especially by the example of his father, Sikandar. Zain-ul-Abidin was deservedly surnamed Bud Shah or Great King. In spite of six centuries having rolled by since he lived, his name is still remembered with genuine reverence and gratitude. Take the name of Bud Shah before a Kashmiri and at once he will with a happy countenance rhyme it with 'Pad Shah'."

Zain-ul-Abidin was the favourite son of his father, and it was because of this that he received a good education at home. Fortunately for him and the people of Kashmir he got an opportunity to travel abroad and learn new arts and crafts at the court of Tamerlane in Samarqand. How he got the opportunity is an interesting story in itself. In 1397 A.D. Timur Lang or Tamerlane, after his conquest of Persia and Turkistan, came to India. Sikandar was then the ruler of Kashmir and when Tamerlane reached Attock, Sikandar wrote to him acknowledging him as his leige lord. Tamerlane was pleased at this and sent him an elephant and other gifts in token of his accepting Sikandar's allegiance. On receipt of these, Sikandar sent several precious articles as presents to Tamerlane and wrote to him praying for the honour of

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being permitted to come in his audience to pay homage to him. Tamerlane replied that he should come to meet him at Attock when he would be returning after the conquest of Hindustan. When Tamerlane was returning to Samarqand after his sanguinary and plundering career in Hindustan, Sikandar started from Srinagar with various rare articles which he wanted to present to him at Attock. But he had not gone farther than Baramulla when news was received that Tamerlane had already proceeded from Attock towards Samarqand. Sikandar then returned to Srinagar and sent his second son, Shahi Khan, then a young boy, with the presents to Tamerlane at Samarqand. Shahi Khan carried out his father's mission successfully. Tamerlane bestowed much favour upon Shahi Khan but the latter could not obtain permission to return to Kashmir for seven years. During this long period Shahi Khan took the opportunity of interesting himself in the arts and crafts of Samarqand which, being the capital of the great conqueror, was at the height of its wealth and glory. When Tamerlane died in 1405 while conducting a vast expedition against China over the mountains of Tartary, Shahi Khan returned to Kashmir.

Imbued with high ideals of kingship, Zain-ul-Abidin set himself to improve the material prosperity of the country by energetic and sustained efforts. As can well be imagined, he found great frustration among the people and the whole administrative machinery broken down due to the ill-advised policy of Sikandar and the subsequent war of succession. The first requisite, therefore, was to bring some order out of the chaotic conditions prevailing in the country. For this purpose he encouraged the old class of officials, the Pandits, to return to Kashmir giving them every facility and completely guaranteeing them religious and civil liberties. Jonaraja records that the judges who were till then accustomed to take bribes from both the plaintiffs and the defendants, were severely dealt with and corruption among the public officials was totally rooted out. Similarly crime was ruthlessly put down. All the criminals were apprehended and put behind bars. Realizing that

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unemployment and poverty resulted in the commission of crime he saw to it that suitable employment was guaranteed to the erstwhile criminals. He also introduced the system of proper registration of important documents to prevent fraudulent transactions in property. He dispensed justice quickly and intelligently. The Sultan provided his subjects with a code of laws and had them all engraved on copper plates and placed in public markets and halls of justice. He, however, abhorred every kind of bloodshed and rarely put to death any offender for a petty crime. It is recorded of him, says Rodgers, that he gave away 400 camel loads for the repose of the soul of a man whom he had executed because of his guilt of killing his brother. When the Chaks set fire to his magnificent palace of 12 storeys, he drove them back and had their leader flogged to death, but took his son, Hussain Chak, into favour. This mildness of temper and leniency in judgment did not, however, encourage any crime in the country. This was due to the complete impartiality of Zain-ul-Abidin as a judge. "Though the king was kind-hearted", writes Jonaraja, "yet for the sake of his people he would not forgive even his son or minister or a friend if he were guilty". He cites the case of Mir Yahaya, who, while drunk killed his wife. Although he was a great favourite of the king he was held guilty and executed. Jonaraja also gives an interesting story of how the king dispensed justice intelligently. Once a Brahman, a resident of Kamraja (the lake district) complained to the king that he could not get back his stolen cow which he had after four years found accidentally with a man living in the Maraj district. The king summoned the alleged thief to his presence and asked him to reply to the charge of the Brahman. The man replied that the cow belonged to him and was with him from her birth. In order to test the veracity of his statement the king threw some green waternuts before the cow and its calf. The cow with relish ate them up while the calf after a few sniffs turned away its head from them. This clearly proved that the cow while with the Brahman was accustomed to eat waternuts, a product of the Wular, whereas the calf which had been brought up in the Maraj district was totally unaccustomed

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to this sort of food. The cow was restored to her lawful owner and the thief was suitably punished.

Previously, due to continued lawlessness and insecurity of life and property, much of the land was left uncultivated by the farmers. Zain-ul-Abidin's first great reform was that he revised the land assessment, reducing it to a fourth of the total produce in some places and to a seventh in others. The cultivators were further protected from the exactions of the revenue officers by a law which prohibited the latter from accepting any gifts.

Side by side with the establishment of an ordered and humane government, he reorganised the Kashmiri army which had severely suffered in discipline and equipment during the preceding periods. When he ascended the throne the army had both the infantry and cavalry divisions. He so organised it as to remove all possibility of rebellion or rising. Moreover, his personal treatment to the officers so charmed them that at his bidding they were ready to march with their men right into the jaws of death. He took great advantage of the recently discovered use of gunpowder and ordered many kinds of cannons to be manufactured in Kashmir. After experimenting with new metals and their alloys he found one from which he cast a cannon and "at his command" says Srivara, "I composed a few lines in praise of the weapon".

With this formidable army he reconquered the Punjab and western Tibet. In all his campaigns he acted very kindly and generously to both the people and the chiefs of the newly acquired territories. Besides putting down internecine conspiracies and removing such elements as tended to disturb the tranquility of his realm, the Sultan further proceeded to enter into friendly relations with his immediate neighbours as well as the potentates and rulers of distant lands. He sent ambassadors with adequate presents to the kings of Khorasan, Turkistan, Turkey, Egypt and Delhi. The king of Tibet reciprocated with suitable presents.

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It is, however, for his encouragement of arts and crafts that Kashmir will for all times to come be indebted to Zain-ul-Abidin. Mention has been made of his study of these arts in Samarqand. With his accession to the throne he invited competent teachers and craftsmen from there to train his subjects in these arts. Among some of the industries introduced by him may be mentioned carpet, papier mache, silk, paper-making, etc. Kashmiris with their natural aptitude for things artistic, soon acquired a great mastery in these crafts and began to produce them in such beautiful designs and varieties that they acquired an unrivalled fame in Asia and Europe, so much so that, when, a century after Zain-ul-Abidin's death, Mirza Haidar of Kashghar brought Kashmir under his virtual rule, he was struck with the industrial and artistic productions of Kashmir. Says he in his famous *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* :

"In Kashmir one meets with all those arts and crafts which are in most cities uncommon, such as stone-polishing, stone-cutting, bottle-making, window-cutting, gold-beating etc. In the whole Maver-ul-Nahr (the country beyond the river Oxus, i.e., Khurasan) except in Samarqand and Bukhara, these are nowhere to be met with, while in Kashmir they are even abundant. This is all due to Zain-ul-Abidin."

"Zain-ul-Abidin", writes Pandit Anand Koul, "turned Kashmir into a smiling garden of industry inculcating in the hearts of the people sane conceptions of labour and life and also implanting in their minds the germs of real progress. He introduced correct measures and weights and made artisans and traders take solemn oaths (which in those halcyon days one could not easily break) not to kill their golden goose by cheating and swindling. He thus promoted commercial morality and integrity and industrial righteousness—qualities which constitute the backbone of a people's credit and reputation. It was through these virtues that the Kashmiris successfully carried on their shawl and other trades worth crores of rupees annually with distant corners of the globe at a period when Kashmir was an isolated country and communications with the outside world were very difficult."

Zain-ul-Abidin was a great lover of music and other fine arts. He always made generous allowances to musicians. Hearing of the Sultan's generosity and of his love for music a good many masters in this art flocked to Kashmir from

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all directions. One of such artists was Mulla Udi of Khorasan. He played on Ud to the great delight of the Sultan and his courtiers. Another master was Mulla Jamal who was a great expert in vocal music. Srivara, the author of the *Zaina Rajatarangini*, was also an accomplished musician and he used to entertain the king often and the latter would always reward him for his fine performances. The Raja of Gwalior hearing of the Sultan's taste for music sent him all the standard books on Indian music, including the *Sangitchudamani*. Gwalior has been the centre of this art and proud of its associations with Tan Sen. It was thus indeed due to Zain-ul-Abidin that music reached the pitch of excellence in Kashmir.

The Sultan also reintroduced the art of drama and dancing which had suffered due to the puritanism of Sikandar. Many actors and dancers, both male and female, came to Kashmir at his invitation and the king held special festivals for their performances. Srivara gives a graphic description of a stage performance during the spring festival which was graced by the Sultan with his presence. Writes he :

“The spectators and the singers knew literature, rhetoric and philosophy and appreciated merit. Young women, proficient in music, possessed of a sweet voice, and with a genuine ardour for singing, graced the place. The men were learned and dignified, and fond of enjoyment and they displayed their taste and their intelligence on the stage. The renowned Tara and the actors sang various songs to the dance tune and to every kind of music. And the songstress, Utsava, who was even like Cupid's arrow, charming to the eyes and proficient in dance, both swift and slow, entranced everybody. The actresses, who displayed the forty-nine different emotions seemed even like the ascending and descending notes of music personified . . . The scene was indeed beautiful, the songs of the actresses were like the voice of the *kokila*, the stage was like a garden where the lamps on it looked like rows of the *champaka* flower and around them were men intoxicated with music, like bees around flowers . . . Rows of lamps surrounded the king as if they were garlands of golden lotuses round him.”

These festivals and fairs were held at different places in the Valley, e.g., at Pampur, Bijbihara, Anantnag, Baramulla,

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Nagam, etc., and the king graced these occasions with his presence. Fire-works and illuminations were also attractions of these fairs.

Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin was a great builder. Remains of his numerous towns, villages, canals, and bridges still exist and bear his name. It may safely be asserted that he was really the Shah Jahan of Kashmir. To increase the agricultural production, he constructed several canals noted among which were the *Utpalapur*, *Nandashaila*, *Bijbihara*, *Advin*, *Amburher*, *Manasbal*, *Zaingir*, and the *Shahkul* at Bhawan. Many of these canals supplied water to otherwise dry *karewa* lands and during the past fifty years have been repaired and reconstructed. "The long and peaceful reign of Zain-ul-Abidin", says Stein, "was productive of important irrigation works. Jonaraja's and Srivara's chronicles give a considerable list of canals constructed under the Sultan". Jonaraja mentions that one of his engineers, Damara Kach, paved a road with stones and thus made it fit for use even during the rainy season. This may be one of the earliest metalled roads built in the world. Similarly he built a wooden bridge in Kashmir still known by the name of Zainkadal (Zain-ul-Abidin's bridge).

The Sultan introduced and encouraged wooden architecture and built numerous beautiful and artistic buildings throughout the length and breadth of Kashmir. Mirza Dughlat mentions in his *Tarikhi Rashidi* that the palace *Rajdan* was a unique building in the East. It was 12 storeys high and contained numerous rooms, halls, varandahs and staircases. It was decorated with exquisite carvings and fresco paintings. He had constructed another palatial building, the Zain Dab in Zaingiri, which the Chaks burned down. In all villages and towns he built rest houses for himself and travellers so that his subjects might not be put to trouble during his frequent visits thereto.

Previously the waters of the Dal lake joined the river near the 2nd bridge, but he got a canal—the Mardug—which connected the Dal with the Anchar lake. He beautified the

canal with artistically-built bridges, some of which are extant even to-day. The city of Srinagar was shifted towards the Mar canal, the new locality being high and dry. It is still called Naushahr or the New City and numerous ruins testify to its grandeur and artistic layout.

Lawrence says that Zain-ul-Abidin planted gardens wherever he went, four of his gardens which were well-known being Baghi Zainagiri, Baghi Zaina Dab, Baghi Zainapur and Baghi Zainakut. It is, however, difficult to trace them now. The layout and designs of these gardens seem to have been of the purely Kashmiri type improved upon by the influences from Samarqand and Bukhara.

Zain-ul-Abidin's love for letters is well-known in Kashmir. He realized that learning, for which Kashmir was noted from the earliest times, needed to be encouraged so that this land of *Sarda* might again shine forth as the homeland of knowledge and learning. For this purpose he established numerous schools, colleges and a residential university. His interest in the intellectual growth and development of his subjects was keen and unflagging and he extended his patronage to scholars in as unstinted a measure as to artisans and craftsmen. Hence the great influx into Kashmir of scholars and men of letters from other lands. Many Kashmiri Pandits well-versed in Sanskrit adorned his court. Among these may be mentioned Soma Pandit, who held a high post in the Translation Bureau and wrote an account of Zain-ul-Abidin's life in his book *Zaina Charit*; Bodhi Butt, another eminent scholar, who translated several Sanskrit works into the Persian language. Jonaraja and Srivara, the famous authors of the later *Rajatarangini*, were patronized by the king. Among the Persian and Arabic scholars may be mentioned the names of Maulana Kabir, Mulla Hafiz Baghdadi, Mulla Jamal-ud-din and Qazi Mir Ali.

It is evident that all these literary activities with all their incidental expenses could not have continued and acquired the volume they did unless the king himself were a scholar "well versed in the literature of his age" and

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thoroughly conversant with a number of languages. His activities in the domain of literature and scholarship were not confined to merely translating the books. He spent huge sums in establishing a library which could favourably compare with the one established by the Samanids. This library remained intact for one hundred years after his death when it was destroyed. It seems that as a result of the king's encouragement, education was imparted to high and low. Writes Srivara :

“Even women, cooks and porters were poets ; and the books composed by them exist to this day in every house. If the king be a sea of learning and partial to merit, the people too become so. The meritorious king Zain-ul-Abidin for the purpose of earning merit built extensive lodging houses for students and the voices of students studying logic and grammar arose from these houses. The king helped the students by providing teachers, books, houses, food and money and he extended the limits of learning in all branches. . . . Even the families which never dreamt of learning produced men who, through the favour of the king, became known for their erudition.... There was not a branch of learning or arts or literature or fine arts which were not studied.”

Nor did the king neglect other social welfare activities. Under him flourished many celebrated *vaid*s and *hakims* who looked after the health of the people. Shri Buth, who once cured the king of a severe illness became later one of his trusted counsellors. Similarly, Karpurabuth, the famous physician of his time, was also patronized by the king. Many famous *hakims* from Central Asia and India came to his court and the king opened dispensaries in various parts of the kingdom where free medicines were supplied to the patients.

There were other charitable institutions which the king maintained. Jonaraja records that in various towns food was distributed free to the poor and infirm. At special festivals which were frequently held, feeding the poor was a regular feature. “The king caused rest houses for travellers to be built at the outskirts of villages and they were supported by the villagers ; he caused shelter to be built in the forests”.

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It is, however, for his high sense of toleration that Zain-ul-Abidin will always be known in history. Living in an age when religious persecutions were the order of the day, his reign shines out as a bright gem amidst the narrow-minded and short-sighted rulers of his time. He made Kashmir the real paradise in which men of all religions and nationalities mingled together and shared one another's joys and sorrows. In return for his patronage and love the Hindus vied with the Muslims in turning their homeland into a smiling garden of peace and prosperity.

Sikandar's unstatesmanlike policy had left many a deep wound behind. As mentioned, a majority of Hindus had left Kashmir taking with them valuable books both religious and secular. Zain-ul-Abidin had already as heir-apparent and prime minister of his brother, made himself popular with the Hindus who looked upon him as their best protector during the dark period of religious bigotry. When, therefore, he ascended the throne, confidence returned to them and as soon as he sent messengers to India inviting them back to their birthplace, they responded with great alacrity and pleasure. He enacted certain laws which vouchsafed to them a just administration and a trial of their cases according to their own customs. The odious persecutionary measures instituted by Sikandar and Siya Buth, were revoked, and a general toleration of all religions was proclaimed. Many of the temples which had been demolished in the last reign were rebuilt and permission was granted to erect new temples. Jonaraja and Srivara mention that the king built two temples near Ishabar and granted rent-free lands to maintain them. The king remitted the poll tax and granted jagirs to deserving Hindus. He penalised the killing of cows and himself abstained from meat-eating during the holy festivals of the Hindus. The king forbade the killing of birds and fish in several *nagas* sacred to the Hindus. The *Rajatarangini* gives a detailed account of how the king took part in the annual Nagyatra festival, when he would don the robes of a Hindu mendicant and perform the pilgrimage in company with other pilgrims. On the way he fed thousands of ascetics and

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Brahmans. To expiate the wrongs done to the Hindus by his father he built numerous homes for the widows of the Brahmans killed by his intolerant parents.

Zain-ul-Abidin was much impressed with the teaching of the Hindu *Sastras* and got many, including the *Mahabharata*, translated into Persian for his close study. Srivara mentions that the king studied these scriptures assiduously and was fond of holding discussions.

He installed many learned and experienced Hindus in high posts of trust and honour. Shri Bhutt, Tilakacharya Shivabhutt, Simha Bhutt, Karpura Bhutt, Rupya Buth, Bohdi Buth and Shri Ramanand were some of the famous intellectuals and administrators who rose to high power under him. The administration was completely run by Kashmiri Pandits who at his bidding studied Persian, the new court language.

The cumulative effect of his policy of toleration was that he became a symbol of national unity and solidarity and all sections of the people gave their unstinted support and loyalty to his various measures for raising the honour of Kashmiris abroad and uplifting them morally and materially.

Zain-ul-Abidin led a saintly life. He did not take any money from the State treasury for his personal use, but contented himself with the earnings from a copper mine near Aishmuqam. He had only one wife in bold contrast to the prevailing custom among Eastern potentates of having a large seraglio. He abstained from the use of intoxicating liquors and during Ramzan would not even take meat. In his private life he wore a simple dress ; although his regal robes became famous throughout northern India and Central Asia for their fine and costly material. He was a highly religious man, extending equal respect to all the great religions of the world. He venerated holy saints and faqirs. "The king", says Jonaraja "took his instructions about religious penances and about the pleasures of life both from superior and inferior hermits and gave them ear-pendants, vessels of gold, and clothes".

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Zain-ul-Abidin was not fortunate in having worthy sons. The latter part of his life was saddened through the constant quarrels and skirmishes among them. However, he will live in the hearts of future generations of Kashmiris as a great man to whom goes the credit of raising the honour of the Kashmiris among the various nations of the world during his as well as during the later periods.

He died in 1474 A.D. after a glorious reign extending over more than 51 years. His death was mourned by the entire people for a long time and even up to this day the people take his name with reverence and gratitude as a word of good omen. No tribute can repay the debt Kashmir owes to him for ever. The poet chronicled the year of his demise in this feelingly rendered Persian stanza :

*Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin khima dar Khulde-barin
Be nur shud taj o nagin be nur shud arozo sama
Az bahri tarikash 'ayan be sar shudah ander jahan
'Adlo karam 'ilm o 'alam jah o hasham sulh o safa.*

Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin went to dwell in heaven
The crown and the seal became lustreless, the earth and the sky
became gloomy,
From that date evidently headless became in the world :
Justice and generosity ; learning and power ; glory and pomp ;
peace and tolerance.

TWO MYSTICS

THE geographical position of Kashmir indicates, in the best sense of the term, the head—nay, the brain of India. This small country has been prolific in producing not only great kings whose sway extended over parts of India and Central Asia, great philosophers, grammarians, historians, astronomers and poets, who shone like luminaries in the firmament, but also women of extraordinary talent and rare gifts. Yasovati, Sugandah, Didda and Kuta adorned the throne of the country and held it secure with great wisdom, playing their game successfully against powerful enemies. Laleshwari, Rupabhawani and Jaman Ded were ascetics of a sublime and exalted kind, surrounded by a halo of divinity.

Kashmir has also been a place where a synthesis of various Asiatic cultures has been forged, the waves of these coming from different directions and meeting in this happy Valley. First the early Aryans from India, and later on the Kushans, the Indo-Scythians, the Mongols and the Mohamedanised Turks from Central Asia and China, found here a congenial soil and set about creating settlements. It is, therefore, not strange that Kashmir through a long and chequered history has made unique contributions to the art and literature of the Eastern world.

In the Middle Ages of Europe, when the twelfth century began, a wave of Hindu mysticism swept India. It found its peak in the devotional poems of Surdas and Mira; and in Kashmir this great philosophical upsurge, the Shaivism, produced its popular exponent in Lalla Yogishwari. The Kashmiri language which had come to be developed some centuries earlier, was the vehicle through which these religious and social philosophies reached the masses. The Sanskrit language, known as the "language of the

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Gods", was studied and spoken by only a small number of Pandits. Simultaneously, a parallel development of Islamic mysticism was taking place in the widely-separated countries of Mesopotamia and Iran. Islam in the middle of the eighth century A.D., had become ossified into set dogmas and rituals, and the need was felt among its followers for a "heart", rather than a "head", religion. The urge found a ready source of inspiration in the lives and sayings of Hindu and Buddhist saints in Central Asia and China. As a result, the Sufis, a new sect of Islamic philosophers in whose sayings and doings Hindu and Buddhist influence can be traced, arose.

The Sufis found a fertile ground in Iran. Thence their philosophy found its way into the Valley of Kashmir and it is fortunate that the wave of Islamic mysticism reached Kashmir at a time when popular Hindu mysticism was being preached assiduously by Lalla Yogishwari and others. Great Sufis like Bulbul Shah and Shah Hamadan gained a ready response from the Kashmiri mystic, whose sayings reveal the deep influence of Sufi philosophy and learning. Long and frequent were the meetings in which the teachers of both sects discussed subtle points and their co-mingling supplies a living picture of religious tolerance among the Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims of the country.

Laleshwari, more popularly called by the homely name of Lal Ded (Mother Lal), was one of those noble figures who come into the world at periodic intervals to deliver the message of truth and peace, and to exhort humanity to follow the higher ideals and shun the frivolities of mortal existence. She was a follower of Shaivism, the principles and rituals of which she preached simply in the language of the people. She was born towards the middle of the fourteenth century of the Christian era, at the time Sultan Alau-ud-Din became the third Muslim king of Kashmir. Her parents lived at Pandranthan (the ancient Puranadishtan) four miles south-east of Srinagar.

Many legends about her birth survive and according to the custom of the times she received the elements of her educa-

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tion from the family priest, Sidh Sri Kanth. It was this cleric who noted the child's precocious nature and her love for religious knowledge. He initiated her into the mysteries of Shaiva Yoga.

Laleshwari, however, married early in life. Her husband lived at Pampore (the ancient Padmapore) for, being given to secular activities, he could not reconcile himself easily to the religious leaning of his young wife. A rift, doubtless hastened by the badgerings of her mother-in-law, developed between husband and wife, and Lal Ded bore the ill-treatment of the older woman patiently. Today young wives in Kashmir are exhorted to follow her example and bear their ills with the same fortitude.

Under her preceptor, Sidh Sri Kanth, Lal Ded progressed in her spiritual attainments. She far surpassed him, as the following couplet relates :

Gav tsatha guras khasithay,

Tyuth var ditam Diva.

The disciple surpassed the Guru ;

O God, grant me a similar boon.

Eventually she gave up her secluded life and became a wandering preacher. She led a severely ascetic life, clad in the bareness of one who had forsaken comforts, and by example and precept conveyed her teachings. Like Mira she sang of Shiva, the great Beloved, and the thousands of her followers, Hindus as well as Muslims, committed to memory her famous *Vakyas*. These sayings touch the chords of the Kashmiri's heart as powerfully as they do his ear and they have become current coins of quotation being used even in daily conversation. Their wide use has led to their moulding the national mind and shaping national ideals.

Some of these maxims have been collected and published by Dr. Grierson, Dr. Barnett, Sir Richard Temple and Pandit Anand Koul and apart from consideration that they explained the Shaiva philosophy of Kashmir through the

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Kashmiri dialect, they exemplify the synthesis of cultures for which Kashmir has always been famous.

In one of her sayings, Lal Ded criticises the cold and meaningless way in which religious rituals are performed :

"God does not want meditations and austerities,
Through love alone canst thou reach the abode of Bliss,
Thou mayst be lost like salt in water,
Still it is difficult for thee to know God."

Exhorting her followers to stick fast to ideals of love and service to humanity paying no thought to the praise or condemnation that might follow from their observance, she says :

"Let them jeer or cheer me ;
Let anybody say what he likes ;
Let good persons worship me with flowers ;
What can any one of them gain, I being pure ?
If the world talks ill of me,
My heart shall harbour no ill-will ;
If I am a true worshipper of God,
Can ashes leave a stain on a mirror ?"

That God is to be found everywhere and does not confine Himself to temples and mosques, is aptly put in another verse :

"Idol is of stone, temple is of stone ;
Above (temple) and below (idol) are one ;
Which of them wilt thou worship, O foolish Pandit,
Cause thou the union of mind with soul ?"

She further castigates the fanatical followers of so-called "religions" in the following words :

"O Mind, why hast thou become intoxicated at another's expense ?
Why hast thou mistaken true for untrue ?
The little understanding hath made thee attached to other's religion ;
Subdued to coming and going ; to birth and death."

The aspirant, she says again, should try to attain perfection in this life :

Siva is with a fine net spread out,

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He permeath the mortal coils.

If thou, whilst living, canst not see Him, how canst thou
when dead,

Take out Self from Self, after pondering over it.

Giving her own experiences she says :

I saw and found I am in everything,

I saw God effulgent in everything.

After hearing and pausing, see Siva,

The House is His alone ; Who am I, Lalla.

A younger contemporary of Lal Ded was the Kashmiri mystic, Nund Rishi or Sheikh Nur-ud-Din, revered alike by the Muslims and Hindus of Kashmir.

Nund Rishi, or Sahazanand (Sheikh Nur-ud-Din, as he was afterwards named by Mir Mohamad of Hamadan), was born in 1377 A.D. at Kaimuh, a village two miles to the west of Bijbihara. His ancestors belonged to a noble family of Kishtwar and had emmigrated to the Valley. His father, Salar Sanz, was a pious man and came under the spiritual influence of a Sufi saint, Yasman Rishi, who arranged his marriage to Sadra Maji. The child of their union was Nund Rishi, the patron saint of Kashmir.

In his very childhood Nund Rishi gave proof of his saintly nature. He held himself aloof from the daily affairs of the family and, though apprenticed in several trades, showed no inclination for any of them. Finally he gave up the world and lived in a cave for 12 years practising penances which reduced him almost to a skeleton. His fame as a saint and the glory of his spiritual attainments travelled far and wide attracting to him a great number of followers. Though unable to read and write, he gave utterance to hundreds of beautiful sayings which furnish Kashmiri literature with gems having both a terrestrial as well as celestial meaning. Concise and objective as their approach, they have become stamped in people's memories. They have been collected and preserved in two volumes called the *Rishi Nama* and *Nur Nama* ; but, because of the transliteration in the Persian alphabet, many of them are not easily deciphered.

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Nund Rishi exhorted his followers to perform good actions. That, he said, was the secret of happiness in this world as well as in the life to come :

The dog is barking in the compound,
O Brothers ! give ear and listen to (what he says) :
"As one sowed, so did he reap ;
Thou, Nund, sow, sow, sow."

Of the austere life, he says :

The cave seems to me to be a celestial castle ;
The quilt seems to me to be a silken garment ;
I play with the rats as if they were creatures of good omen
to me ;
One year seems to me to be one single hour.

He preached that all men should lead disciplined lives
and none should fall a prey to worldly desires :

Desire is like the knotted wood of the forest,
It cannot be made into planks, beams or into cradles ;
He who cut and felled it,
Will burn it into ashes.

Religious schisms were raising their head in his time
and Nund Rishi warns the Kashmiris against the snares of
false prophets in the following terms :

I saw a priest blowing out fire (and)
Beating a drum to others ;
The priests have nice big turbans on their heads ;
They walk about daintily dressed ;
Dressed in priestly robes they indulge in mutton,
They run away with cooking pots under their arms.

Again :

Thy rosary is like a snake ;
Thou bendest it on seeing the disciples ;
Thou hast eaten six platefuls, one like another ;
If thou art a priest, then who are robbers.

Nund Rishi also left what might be called a note on the
state of the world to come :

During this iron Age I found liars prospering ;
In the house of the pious I found grief born of poverty.

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He constantly advised the seeking of good company and shunning the bad, contrasting the two in forceful terms. He showed that rogues will always wrong the good, attacking them with dishonest words, if one lacked in care and gave them such opportunities :

Spend thy days with the good
The *Shah Wulga* (one of the best kinds of rice) will get
pounded.

Never go about with the wicked
Do not walk close to pots covered with
Soot (else thou shalt get soiled).

He also held that true devotion to God lay in leading a disciplined life.

It availed men nothing to carry out the rites and rituals of religion in a cold and mechanical manner.

If thou listeneth to truth, thou oughtest to subdue the five
(senses) ;

If thou lowereth only thy fleshy body, the fleshy body will
not save thee ;

If thou maketh union with Siva,
Then only, O Rishi Mali, will prayer avail thee.

Again :

Having washed thy face, thou hast called the believers to
prayer ;

How can I know, O Rishi, what thou feelest in thy heart, or
what thy bows are for ?

Thou hast lived a life without seeing (God) ;
Tell me to whom didst thou offer prayer.

Of true worship he says :

Do not go to *Sheikh* and priest and Mulla;
Do not feed the cattle on *arkhor* leaves ;
Do not shut thyself up in mosques or forests ;
Enter thine own body with breath controlled in communion
with God.

Sheikh Nur-ud-Din acquired enormous influence over the people of Kashmir and, when he passed away at an advanced age, King Zain-ul-Abidin himself was the chief mourner at his funeral. His grave at Tsrar Sharif is an

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object of pilgrimage, Kashmiris of all religions and communities flocking to it every year.

During his life-time, Nund Rishi founded an order of Rishis and, throughout the length and breadth of the Valley, are *Takias* or *Ashrams* dedicated to the numerous Rishis who assiduously followed the precepts of their spiritual head. They lived in complete self-abnegation and helped the Kashmiris to develop the outlook which they have.

On the Hindus, too, the traditions of the Rishis exercised their influence. The last of the great Hindu mystic poets, Parmanand, who died towards the end of the last century, uplifted the people morally and spiritually through his mystical, didactic poems.

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COMING from the same stock and possessing a common cultural heritage, the people of Kashmir have many resemblances of dress, social customs and ceremonies though grouped among themselves as the followers of two different faiths. These resemblances in certain social customs are even connected with birth, marriage and death. The sacred shrines of both communities are situated close together and it is a frequent occurrence that the fairs at these shrines are also held on the same days. The system of *khanadamadi*, a variant of the Hindu custom of adoption, is prevalent among both the communities. In all the important social functions of a Hindu, his Muslim friends and neighbours take a keen and personal interest and vice versa.

Many of these ceremonies and rituals have undergone some minor changes among both the communities due to the impact and influence of modern education and economic strains and stresses. For instance, the old system of having a grass bed for the mother at the time of her confinement has been generally discarded, thanks to the efforts of the medical practitioners who have brought home to the people the dangers of this insanitary practice. Similarly, having costly and decorative dresses for the groom and display of fire-works on festive occasions have been given up; and it is generally found that the sumptuous and prolonged feasts with their bad economic results are things of the past.

Among the Kashmiri Pandits the birth of a male child is generally hailed with joy, while that of a girl evokes little or no pleasure, for there is the system of costly marriage dowries. For eleven days after a child is born, the family and near relatives cannot perform any religious ceremonies. On the eleventh day a purification ceremony, the *Kahnethar*, takes place. On that day, the mother of the child leaves her

room. A *havan* is performed and the child given a name. Before this, however, on the sixth day after the child's birth, both mother and child are bathed. The bath is called the *shran sundar* and after it lighted torches of birchbark are passed round the head of the child and all persons present. The mid-wife does this, all the while repeating the phrase "*shokh ta punasun*" (happiness and more children).

Zara Kasai is the hair-cutting ceremony, performed when a boy is about four or five years old. A *havan* is performed and the boy's head is shaved, leaving only the *choti* at the highest point of the skull. After the *havan*, relations and friends are treated to a feast.

The *Yagnupavit*, or sacred thread-ceremony, is one of the most important ceremonies in the life of a Kashmiri Pandit. It is performed before a boy attains the age of twelve years. The sacred thread is put round the boy's neck by his *guru* and he is thenceforth a twice-born Brahman. From his relations who are present, he begs alms for his *guru* and each gives him from one to ten rupees. All this money he gives to the *guru*. A few days earlier the *garnavai* (house-cleaning), *manzirat* (dyeing of the boy's hands with henna) and *divagon* (bath and anointment) ceremonies are performed. Relatives and friends invited to the accompanying feast generally make cash presents to the parents. The women sing songs daily after the *garnavai* ceremony has taken place. On the day following the main ceremony a *kushalhoma* is performed to mark the safe and pleasant termination of this important event. The guests then return to their homes. The young married women among them each receive a few rupees as *atagat*. Their husbands are also presented with rupees, and one or two rupees are given to each child coming with the guests.

The marriage or *vivah* ceremonies also begin with the *garnavai* or house-cleaning. The *manzirat* and *divagon* then follow. On the wedding day, the bridegroom is dressed in an *achkan* and a *pyjama* and dons a coloured turban. A procession is formed in the courtyard of his home, where he

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takes his stand on the *vyug* (an outline of mystic signs drawn in lime and coloured clays). The oldest woman in the house then comes out and waves lighted lamps and a pair of pigeons in a circle round his head, while the assembled relations join in song and shower coins and sugar over him. The bridegroom is next taken to the house of the bride. He may go in car or ride on a horse, with the processionists following. Sometimes he goes in a boat. Outside the bride's home, too, the *vyug* ceremonies are performed and the wedding party are given a feast by the father of the bride. The *lagan*, or nuptial ceremony, is then performed by the family priests of both the bride and bridegroom. Food is placed before the couple who both eat from the same plate. After this, hand in hand, they walk seven times round a lighted fire.

After the *lagan*, bride and bridegroom return to the latter's home. The bridegroom's party takes them in procession, the ceremony of *vyug* being repeated before starting. Arrived at the groom's house, the bride is first taken to the kitchen and the *thakurdwar*. She is then made to sit on cushions, while the assembled women burn incense and continue with their singing. The bridegroom's sister is the recipient of a good present in cash on this occasion. The next night, the young newly-married pair again go to the house of the bride's parents, where the groom receives presents from them in cash and kind. During the first year of marriage the bride's father sends her various such presents at festivals and on his own birthday, and those of his sons and daughters.

Marriages between boys and girls are generally arranged before they pass their 20th year. The parents of the bride and the bridegroom are the final persons to choose the match. Go-betweens get the horoscopes of marriageable and suitable boys to the father of the girl and if the horoscopes of a boy and the girl tally, inquiries are instituted regarding the social status and the economic position of the family of the boy. The appearance, health and the education of the boy today generally out-weigh all other considerations. Before the marriage ceremony, another custom, that of *vak dan*,

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has now come to the fore, when the parents of the bride and the bridegroom, accompanied by their near relatives, meet in a common friend's house and after partaking of sumptuous tea, solemnly agree to the marriage of their respective son and daughter.

Most of the ceremonies connected with the death of a Kashmiri Pandit are similar to those performed by the Brahmans of India, though in Kashmir these are more elaborate. The dead body is washed and wrapped in a white shroud. A brief *shradha* ceremony is performed before the dead body is carried to the cremation ground. There the ceremony is more elaborate, taking in some cases five or seven hours. Before the dead body is put on the pyre a *nirvana* ceremony with invocations to the Bharavs and chanting of hymns and mystic sounds is performed. The funeral pyre is lit by the son of the dead or by the nearest relatives. After the dead body is consumed by the fire, the mourners return. Before entering the house a fire is lighted at the *ghat* round which the mourners walk after taking a bath in the river. For ten days *shradha* ceremonies are performed at the *ghat* every morning and on the 10th day the son or the chief mourner shaves his head to indicate the end of mourning. On the 11th and 12th days more *shradhas* are performed, and then every month for the first year. After this yearly *shradhas* are performed. In all these ceremonies the priests get a good share in cash and kind given in charity for the peace of the soul of the departed.

The Kashmiri Pandits hold customary ceremonies on many religious festivals. The most important of these festivals is the *Shivratri*. It commences from the first day of dark fortnight of *Phagan* (Feb.-March). From the 5th to the 9th day house-cleaning and washing of the clothes is done. On the 10th day money according to the customary scale is sent to the daughters. On the 11th fried fish and bread are cooked in the house and after a brief ceremony the whole family partake of the food. On the 13th day the head of the family keeps a fast and performs the *puja* of Shiva

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during the night. The 14th day is the feast day. The elders are given presents of sugar or fruit by the younger ones; and cooked rice and meat are sent to the daughters. On the 15th day or first day of the succeeding fortnight, walnuts consecrated at the *puja* are distributed among relations and friends.

Sont or the Spring Festival is celebrated on the 15th of March every year. A basket of unhusked rice, with bread, a rupee, a pen-case, a cup of curds, a few walnuts, cooked rice and some flowers are kept overnight and seen the first thing in the morning on waking up by the inmates of the house. Each picks up one or two walnuts which are dropped in the river after bathing. Generally a fair is held in some open ground of the village or city where the youngsters play games and the women enjoy the new blossoms and the warm sunshine.

Naw warih or the New Year's day falls on the first day of the bright fortnight of *Chet* (March-April) and the custom of unhusked rice, etc. being seen in the morning as on *sont* is observed. The sons-in-law are invited and given a feast, and on return to their homes are given money presents. A big fair is held in every village or a town where Kashmiri Pandits are living in good numbers. New clothes are generally worn on this day.

Baisakhi is also celebrated by the Kashmiri Pandits of Srinagar. A fair is held at *Ishabar* where people generally take a purificatory bath and then visit the nearby Nishat Bagh for a picnic. It is from that day that officially fountains and cascades begin to play in the various old Moghul gardens for the ensuing season.

Jeth Ashtami or the 8th day of the bright fortnight of Jeth (May-June) is sacred on account of the birthday of the Goddess Ragnia. On this day a fair is held at the sacred spring situated at the village of Tulumula. Thousands of people flock thither and spend the night praying and singing around the spring.

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Har Nawmi or the 9th day of the bright fortnight of Har (June-July) is the birthday of the Goddess Sharika whose shrine is situated on the Hari Parvat hill in Srinagar. From early morning people in their thousands go round the sacred hill and also attend a big *havan* performed in honour of the Goddess there.

The Birthday of Lord Krishna is celebrated on the 8th day of the dark fortnight of Bhadon (Aug.-Sept.) when every Kashmiri Pandit keeps a fast which is broken at moonrise. Presents of various fruits and cash are sent to daughters on this day.

Pun is a ceremony held in honour of the Goddess Lakshmi. Bread is prepared in each household on any auspicious day during the bright fortnight of Bhadon and, after performing the necessary religious rites, is distributed among relatives and neighbours.

Kambari pach or the dark fortnight of Assuj (Sept.-Oct.) is entirely devoted to the *shradha* ceremonies. A *shradha* is performed in memory of the departed *pitris* on the days corresponding to the *tithi* of the day of his or her death.

Dusserah or Vijay Dashmi on the 10th of the bright fortnight of Assuj is celebrated as the day of victory of Rama over Ravana. Effigies of Ravana, Kumbkaran and Meghnad are burned at sunset on this day. The ceremonies held are exactly similar to the ones held in the rest of India.

Many of the ceremonies connected with the birth of a Muslim child are akin to those among the Kashmiri Pandits. For instance, visiting shrines, calling the aid of saints and *dervishes* and keeping religious fasts by childless parents in order that they might be blessed with children are common customs. One or two months prior to the time for the confinement, the young wife generally goes to her parent's house where she gives birth to the child. Immediately after the event the *Mulla* comes in and taking the infant by the right ear, whispers the *Azan* welcoming the new arrival to this world of faith, and then he repeats in the left ear the

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Takbir and adds a warning that death is the end of all things. The young mother fasts for one or two days during which she takes only an infusion of certain herbs. On the seventh day which is known as the *sundar* day, the mother bathes and the child is given its name. The name is given by the *pir* of the family, the name generally given being suggested by the month in which the baby is born. Thus a boy born in the month of Ramzan, Shaban or Rajab will most likely be called Ramzan, Shaban or Rajab. A boy born in the month in which a great saint died will be given that name. Thus Sultan is probably the name of a boy who was born in the month in which the great saint Mukdum Sahib died. Among the common names of girls may be mentioned Fazli, Mali, Mihri, Janu, Daulti, Rahmi, Fritsi, Sundri, Zuni, Mukti, Ashumi, etc. On the seventh day the barber is called in and shaves the child's head, and the neighbours and relatives are entertained to a feast. Two or three months later the mother returns to her father-in-law's house carrying with her presents, among which may be a calf or a pony or a mare.

At the age of four or five years the child will be circumcised and this is an occasion of great rejoicings and festivities. The child's feet are dyed with *henna* on the *manzirat* night and the relatives and friends invited to a good feast. For seven days before the ceremony, there is nothing but singing and feasting, and on the day of circumcision the child is placed on a basket under which a cock is cooped, the perquisite of the barber who performs the circumcision. All friends and relatives kiss the child's hand and give him money after which the guests go off to a shrine with the boy and return to the house for a feast. Among the ordinary folk and *hanjis* the custom of taking the boy round the main thoroughfares of the city or the town on horseback or in a boat followed by his relatives and singing parties is quite common.

The Musalmans, if possible, marry their daughters to some near relations and, if this is not possible, they ask some man of their own tribe who has more sons than money, for

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a boy whom they take into their house (*khana damad*). The custom of *khanadamadi* is prevalent among cultivators and *hanjis*. Among the high class Musalmans this system has lately been given up and now marriages are arranged even outside the circle of relatives and friends.

If a marriage with a near relative cannot be arranged, the father of a girl who has reached the years of puberty calls for the services of a go-between, who is usually a man who can relate highly-coloured stories of the magnificence and generosity of his client. When a suitable match has been found the ceremony of betrothal is held. The boy's father goes with a small party of relatives and friends with presents to the girl's house and is entertained by the girl's father. After the feast the priest, in the presence of the party, announces the betrothal, and sometimes commits the contract to writing. Afterwards on the four chief Muslim holy days : Id Ramzan, Id Qurban, Miraj Sharif and Urs Nabi, the boy's father sends presents to the girl which, in the case of high class gentry, are reciprocated with bigger presents to the boy from the girl's father. When the day for the final marriage is fixed, the boy's father sends a cash present as *lagan chir* to the girl's father. For a week before the marriage, festivities and rejoicings are held in the houses of both the boy and the girl and invitations are issued to relatives and friends. The day before the marriage, the boy's father sends a quantity of *mendi* dye to the bride who paints her hands and feet with the red colour. On the marriage day the bridegroom, after a bath, dresses himself up like a Sultan and decks himself with the best clothing he can afford himself or borrow from his friends. His relatives give him presents of money, and then he and his party set off, riding or walking. First they visit some neighbouring shrine and say their prayers and then do reverence to the graves of the bridegroom's father or grandfather. After that they make for the bride's house sending on ahead presents and the palanquin in which the bride will return. As they draw near the bride's house the women of the bride's party come out, singing the song of welcome and praising the bridegroom's qualities. When

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the whole party is assembled the gorgeous groom sits on cushions and the feast commences, winding up with tea. After the feast, the Qazi proceeds to business and if the marriage contract was not written before, he writes it out, receiving a few rupees for his pains. Before this is done, however, the two fathers of the contracting parties fix the amount of *mehr* or dowry according to the custom of the family. Meanwhile the bride and her friends are examining the wedding presents and when all is ready the bride with her hair done up and in her best dress is carried by her brother or maternal uncle into the palanquin and followed by a party of singing women, departs with her husband. In her father-in-law's house she is received with great enthusiasm and parties of singing women come out to greet her; and she is taken into a room arranged for her reception where she takes her seat with her gaze fixed on the ground. When her mother-in-law comes, she salutes her and gives her some presents brought from her father for her. The bride remains for seven days in her new home after which she returns to her father's house. It generally takes months before the father of the girl is able to invite his son-in-law to a feast at his house where he receives cash presents, etc. The bride also generally goes with him and then there is no bar to their coming or going.

The ceremonies connected with the death of a Musalman are simpler than that of a Pandit. At the time of death the *kalma* and some verses from the Quran are pronounced into the ear of the dying man. Those around call on the name of God and break into weeping when he breathes his last. The corpse is then bathed and wrapped in a shroud and carried to the graveyard in a wooden coffin (*tabut*) which can readily be procured from a nearby mosque. The *tabut* is covered with a black cloth from a shrine nearby. The burial is accompanied with recitations of the holy verses from the Quran and other sacred books. The mourners then pray for the peace of the soul of the departed and return to their homes. For some days till the coming Friday, the chief mourner daily visits the grave with the *mulla* and offers prayers. On the next Friday,

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all the friends and relatives of the departed gather at the grave and offer *fatiha* or prayers. They then return to the house of the chief mourner and are served with light refreshments. For a year or two, the *mulla* receives alms from the house of the departed on certain Musalman holy days. The graveyard is planted with irises, tulips, narcissi and some spring flowers. Many rituals and ceremonies connected with birth, marriage and death, have, however, undergone reforms in consequence of modern socio-economic necessities.

The Musalmans of the Valley are very fond of celebrating their holy festivals with great *eclat*. On the Id days they don their new clothes and attend mass prayers in the Idgahs of the towns and villages. Presents are exchanged between relatives and friends. Married daughters and their husbands receive a greater share of these presents. Feasts are held and sumptuous dishes served.

The people visit holy places like Tsrar Sharif, Mukdum Sahib, Rishi Mol, etc., particularly during the annual fairs. Thousands gather and enjoy the shopping provided by many hawkers dealing in things useful to a householder—baskets, earthen vessels, blankets, cotton goods, cheap jewellery, etc. There are also spring and autumn festivals when cultivators offer prayers for getting a good harvest. These *melas* also provide a pleasant change to the otherwise dull life of a villager, and both young and old look forward keenly to their approach.

WINTER

SIXTEEN degrees of frost. The long glittering icicles hanging like transparent swords from the eaves, the strange hush of the landscape covered in snow.

For weeks before the first snowfall the sounds of the woodcutters' axes have echoed in the Valley. The grass, yellowish brown, and the trees, leafless, have awaited the snow, which, when it comes, tells the people that the Valley is settling down for its almost complete isolation of the winter. One gets the impression that many people welcome this isolation. The *kangris* glow and the *hukkas* bubble as men sit and tell stories in the long nights. Huddled in blankets, figures shiver against the frozen scenery. The poor, in cotton, their bare feet red with cold, await the spring in a kind of chilled daze. Their richer brethren doze in hot rooms, the *bukhari* crackling as the *hatab* burns within. Those who earn their living by the *shikara* or the *tonga* sit hunched in their blankets, out of the chilling wind.

The Government has gone to Jammu ; or most of it. Before it went, there was much speculation among the clerks and the *chaprassis*. Some wished to go with the Government, for at Jammu there would be sun, and change ; many more hoped not to go, for at Jammu there would be expense, problems of accommodation and, worse, separation from the Valley which no Kashmiri can leave with pleasure. There was planning of the transport, the packing of files and documents, the bustle of a Government moving to its winter capital when it would, for a few months, destroy the illusion created by the Banihal, the illusion that the Banihal is a barrier. Then one day the Secretariat is quiet. A handful of people have remained behind so that the machine of the Secretariat ticks quietly through the winter months. It is the

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silence of winter in the Valley which is the most soothing thing of all to many Kashmiris after the bustle of the summer and the preparation of the autumn, when the visitors have gone. Those dependent on visitors should have made enough money to carry them through the dark winter. Those who are craftsmen sit longer near the *kangri* in the sealed work-room, their fingers fashioned beauty with which they hope to ensnare the visitor of the coming summer. But over all is the greyish sky and the feeling of being cut off from the world. It is in many ways, a pleasant feeling. The student or the scholar can concentrate on his work ; no sunny lake or mountain spring can call him now ; and the stranger who spends the winter in Kashmir can stand by the river and watch the poor and marvel at their toughness, their cheerful acceptance of the season which is cruel to them. Seeing this, the stranger can realise that with this spirit, educated and led by imaginative men, a Kashmir can arise which will be what Switzerland is in Europe—a land of peace, of warm and comfortable houses, of contented farmers and honoured craftsmen ; where winter is a magnet to the outsider who likes winter sports.

As the winter evening creeps over Srinagar, you see a soft, greyish mist forming on the river, dim lights beginning to glow on the house-boats and the *doongas*, and a *shikara* gliding on the iron-coloured, glistening water, bearing someone who is, perhaps, expected by a friend. For winter is a time of visiting, of tea and conversation, the salt tea or the green tea of the Kashmiris, poured hot and steaming from the samovar, or the Indian tea of the Indo-European table with cakes and sandwiches, and conversation about the cold, or will it snow again, or did the mail-plane come in today ? In warm rooms people who have been separated by the sparkling turmoil of the summer, whether serving visitors or entertaining guests or relatives, meet again and renew friendships ; using Winter for what it is in Kashmir, a snow-bound halt in the busy seasons of the tourist's playground, a break in the peasant's ancient struggle with the land.

There was a foreigner who came here in the

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18th century, an Italian Jesuit bound for Tibet. In his book he describes how he was unable to continue his journey and was snowed up for six weeks in Srinagar. Despite aircraft and motor-cars, that can still happen today; though, had he lived in Srinagar now, the Jesuit could have gone to a tea-shop or a coffee-house for conversation, only the isolated silent atmosphere of the landscape being the same.

The task of the skeleton government machinery left in the city for the winter is one of maintenance; permits for timber, rations, supplies of all kinds, the control of the electric supply. By the cold river, white and ghostly in the winter light, the Secretariat is silent, but inside the building a handful of men maintain the momentum of civil administration until the first spring flowers come through and the sun melts away the winter. Then the trucks will come over the Banihal from Jammu. There will be a great busy-ness. The government will be back and the Tourists' Bureau will be preparing for the rush of visitors into the Valley. The winter, officially, will be over.

But that is some months away yet. The sky is still grey. Down on some airstrip beyond the Banihal, planes wait for a break in the clouds, while in the Valley people await their mail and newspapers. When he does come, the postman is muffled up to his ears, his cold hands trembling with the few letters he has in his bag. When the plane does get through, the post office will be flooded with mail and the clerks will have a job to sort in time for those who have waited days for the noise of the plane's engines over the Valley.

When you walk along the Bund, you see the silent house-boats and one or two numbed people from warmer parts, chatting with Kashmiri boatmen. "Is it always so cold?" a person from Central India, new to the Valley, will ask. "Cold?" laughs the boatman, "why, this is warm"; and, hunched in his overcoat, the person reflects that his family may doubt his word when he tells them on his return of such a climate.

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Further on, a poor man is sorting *singhara* nuts dragged from the bed of the lake. He will roast them and perhaps passers-by will purchase some. Further on, if you are an obvious stranger, a man with a house-boat for hire will eye you thoughtfully. He will approach you and suggest you need his house-boat. It is warm, he says. Dry and comfortable. He will feed you well. You will be happy in this boat. But you do not need the boat, you tell him, and he knows he must await the summer. But it was worth asking, for the stranger is rare in winter. One day, though, when Kashmir is on its feet, the stranger in the Valley will not be so rare. The poor Kashmiri will be rare one day, and his Valley will flourish. Winter will still be winter, but there will be more loveliness in the Valley. Winter sports will, of course, be there and the visitor will discover the Kashmir that he does not know, not the Kashmir of green grass and sunlight but another one of snow and warm stoves, and interesting things to do and places to visit.

The stranger in the winter Valley learns that the Kashmiris are a people who can adapt themselves to seasons which change from almost unearthly spring to nearly arctic winter, and remain cheerful and energetic. And he thinks that one day these people will realise themselves and will make their Valley a place to be envied, not just for its scenery, which was ever famed, but also for its living conditions and its almost limitless possibilities. Small and compact as it is, and peopled by men and women of talent and adaptability, it will be a land which many strangers will wish to see and study, in winter as well as in summer.

The snow falls quietly and the land, wrapped in its white glittering sheet of the season, is still. Under the snow the spring roots are stirring and the Kashmiris, bent over their *kangris*, count the days. There is time to doze and to plan thoughtfully for the coming season of summer. There is time to chat idly, or solve family problems in leisured wisdom. The snow falls thickly, dissolving like greyish paste in the river or thickening the mantle on the roofs of the

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empty, waiting house-boats. Winter is only halfway on its hushed, mysterious journey.

In their dark, hermetically sealed houses, sitting over the comforting *kangris*, the poor and the not-so-poor are warm. They must combat the winter's freezing grip and this, since time immemorial, has been their method, airless but warm. Times will change, and one day there will be a cheaper fuel and windows to let in the light.

The rich, growing scarce now all over the world, can almost ignore the winter, and those poised uncertainly between poverty and riches, educated and conscious that hygiene and warmth can go together, strive for a warm room with light and air.

Kashmir is passing from an ancient phase into another, almost imperceptibly. Even the winter does not hide this from the stranger, who sees young men who walk fast, without blankets or *kangris*, alert, their eyes full of plans for their lives and the country as they stride through the winter streets over the crunching snow.

It is these young men the stranger watches in the winter ; for, unencumbered by *kangri* though, perhaps, poor and thinly clad, their walk speaks of a new energy, that energy which winter brings with it in northern lands, and these young men breathe the sharp, clean winter air of their country. And they fill the stranger with hope for a truly new Kashmir. The old Kashmiri scurries by, hunched and huddled in his blanket, for winter, though appearing the same for all men, is an enemy for the old man. For the young it is a challenge to the spring.

The winter spins itself out slowly, greyly, often with piercing cold as the temperature drops. The great ring of mountains is hidden in grey skies and heavy cloud. As March and April come, there is a sort of quickening, a tremor of cold, golden light as the sun feels its way through the winter darkness. A few birds begin to sing and from the

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snow a green slender finger appears ; a bud, a new plant. The thaw comes swiftly, perhaps in slushing showers of rain. Children run faster and old men look hopeful again as the sun touches them, as that curious, almost physical, happiness of spring moves in the softening air. By mid-April the brown jaded grass has turned to a deep green, the almond and cherry trees are in blossom, their petals strewing the grass as they fall slowly before the greater germination of the fruit. One day it is really warm and, along the Bund, the house-boat men and their families, women, children, even the old, are shaking carpets, scrubbing out the rooms of the boats, airing the furniture. There is much shouting and joy, for the winter is over and now Kashmir can prepare for the visitors.

The first visitors are quickly noticed. They are like the first swallows, but they do not make the summer. Will this really be a good season ? Will the house-boats be full ? Will it be better than the last season ? No one can say, but all can hope.

Tongas which have been laid up all winters come out. The salesman lucky enough to have a shop of his own patrols the Bund, handing his printed cards to the visitors. He can supply wood-work, silverwares, papier mache, furs, shawls, carpets, shoes, handbags, and copper-work. If the visitors like their buying organised, they can go to the Emporium. If they like to argue and go away with that very old human feeling that they have got a real bargain, they will follow the salesman.

In the sunlight, as spring turns to summer, the whole ring of blue, snow-capped mountains can be seen again. Bright, singing birds are everywhere and bees zoom among the blossoms. Lilac and Iris scent is heavy in the gardens. The Kashmiri is happy. His blanket has been put by for colder nights. The *shikaras* are decked again with their coloured cloth covers. The visitors who use the *shikaras* can lie back on long cushions while they glide across water

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as smooth as blue-grey slik, between the poplars and the chinars loaded again with foliage. It seems impossible that this soft, magnificent Valley of languour, of blossom and green turf, could ever have been covered in snow and darkened by heavy winter skies. The stranger cannot believe that a hard winter, a season of shivering and of stoves, has so recently faded away before the sun and the spring.

As summer deepens the visitors come in by bus and by plane. The Bund is filled with people in summer clothes and, hopefully, the Kashmiris who rely on the tourist trade see the warm glow of prosperity again ; a softer winter with better firewood and better food and clothing, for the winter is what he must always plan for. A bad tourist season means a harder winter for him, but he is optimistic and it is summer and the sun is kind.

Fruit appears again with summer. Apples, pears, cherries, apricots, strawberries and nuts, all in abundance. The visitors, leaving behind them the burning heat of India's plains, can lie in the sun, swim, climb mountains to the rim of the snows, or wander in the magnificent Moghul gardens which the kings set like jewels throughout the Valley. The summer runs down slowly and the visitors go reluctantly, but those, who have once seen autumn in Kashmir, linger. They see the chinars turn scarlet, a sight of almost unreal beauty against the quietening Valley. Then they, too, depart and autumn showers the leaves on to the yellowing grass until they lie in bronze heaps for the children to gather for *kangri-fuel*. There is a sparkle of cold in the air. Not that dead cruel cold of winter yet, but the first threat of it. The poplars are grey now and the branches of the huge chinars are black, like twisted iron shapes against the sky. The houseboat man closes his boat and the family snuggle down into the little boats in which they will spend winter. Once again the axe rings in the Valley. The sky lowers, grey, and the silence grows deeper as snow gathers before

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the soft fall of flakes on the land. The birds are quiet. The old men and women are scarcer on the roads of the city, for the rooms are being sealed against the coming cold. Soon it is snowing hard and the Valley is shut off again, save for the occasional plane braving the Banihal cloud.

KANGRI

THE advent of the cold season sees a Kashmiri busy in making provision to face the arctic nights and the chilly days ahead. He collects firewood and charcoal to last for six months, obeying the adage, "*Hima dari, hama dari*" : "When fuel is in the house, everything is in the house."

Life in the side valleys and upper reaches perforce comes to a standstill as a result of the heavy snowfalls. These may be as deep as nine feet and, with the chill frost added, there is cause to appreciate the saying, "*Dast shustan manand hazar gupardan*" (even washing one's hands is equal to giving one thousand cows in alms). The villagers, mostly agriculturists, make the best of the idle months by turning to blanket, *pattu* or *gubba* manufacture. Often, the men have to keep vigil during the snowstorms to shove the snow off the thatched roofs of their cottages, lest these frail dwellings built of sun-dried bricks crumble under the weight of the accumulated snow. And, be it the student, the clerk, the artisan or the shopkeeper in the town, winter also takes a toll of his patience. Every Kashmiri, therefore, hails the spring with joy. He betakes himself to the almond gardens and pays his homage to the sweet lilacs. It is not only his love of beauty and colour which impels him to do so, but also a spirit of thanksgiving. For the winter with its miseries of the cold and the dreariness of the white snow has passed and earth come to life again.

During the winter the problem for the Kashmiri is how to keep his family and himself warm, and it immediately strikes one as strange that houses in Kashmir have no fire-places and chimneys. Bernier, Moorcroft, Hugel, Vigne and other travellers have all noted the fact. The Kashmiri, however, like the practical man that he is, has found a cheap means of keeping warm in the kangri, a portable stove, which

KANGRI

protects him from the rigours of the cold, indoors as well outside his home, and pilots him through the winter to a safe and pleasant spring and summer. He loves the kangri and adores it :

*Ay kangri, ay kangri
Qurban tu Hur-o-Pari*

*O Kangri, O Kangri offering to you ;
Thou art a virgin of Paradise, thou art a fairy.*

The story is told of a *hakim* who once visited the Valley to see what he could do for the poor during the severe winters. On reaching Baramulla, where visitors changed their horses and coolies for boats which took them to Kashmir, he saw a boatman squatting in his boat in the cold wind. The man wore only a thin shirt. The *hakim* thought that the man was mad, for it certainly seemed that he would catch chill and die. But the boatman had a kangri between his knees, and when the *hakim* saw this he decided to return whence he came, saying : "The Kashmiri people have got their own antidote for the winter cold. No need is there for me to go to them."

Every Kashmiri, wherever he goes, whenever seen, asleep or awake, at work or at play, sitting down or walking, has the kangri held in one hand or suspended beneath his long loose *phiran*.

The kangri is a portable stove consisting of two parts, the inner an earthenware vessel containing fire and called the *kundal* ; the outer part an encasement of wicker-work, sometimes very pretty with its ornamentation of rings and brilliant colouring. A little wooden or silver spoon (*tsalan*), tied to the handle, completes this oriental brazier, which may be purchased in any Kashmir bazaar for the sum of eight annas and upwards, according to make and size. The kangri can also consist of only an earthenware vessel, sometimes ornamented. It is then called a *manan*.

The best kangris are made in Tsrar, the village famous as the burial-place of Sheikh Nur-ud-Din, the saint of

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Kashmir. Anantnag, Shahabad and Sopur are also noted for good kangris, which are known after these places where they are made and described as *Anantnag kangri*, *Shahabad kangri* and so on. The peasant's crudely-made kangri is called the *Gristi kangri* while the finely worked and coloured ones are known as the *Khoja kangris*.

Wicker-work is an industry of importance in Kashmir and most villages have artisans who make the encasing basket for the kangri.

Numerous sayings have attached themselves to the kangri and not a few folk-songs of the light type celebrate the virtues of the "Snow Queen" :

Kami sana kundalay niyi myani Kangar,
Kya kara chas tsalan,
Kapay yiviham kopuy kadahas,
Kya kara chas tsalan

O ! which wretch of a woman has stolen my *Kangar* ?
What can I do ! I bear the loss :

Could I catch that wretch, I would tear the hair out of
her head.

What can I do ! I bear the loss.

It has been suggested that the Kashmiris learnt the use of the kangri from the Italians in the retinue of the Moghul Emperors who usually visited the Valley during summer months.

In other cold countries besides Italy, braziers have been preferred to fireplaces. Both in Italy and Spain, braziers were made in a great variety of shapes and ornamented. They bore medallions with figures, heraldic devices, and complex bas-reliefs. Braziers were used in France till as late as the seventeenth century. They were placed on tripods, with fire-irons attached, or made portable with bars on the moveable top to rest the feet upon.

The Kashmiris use a special kind of charcoal (*tapan tsini*) in their kangri. Since the hot embers in them must

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yield constant heat, they have found that charcoals made from *Pohu* wood and chinar leaves are the best. Peasants living near the forests make these charcoals during the autumn and store them till winter. They then fetch a good price in the cities and towns and every morning during the cold season one sees ghostlike processions of peasants travelling with their loads of charcoal over the snowbound roads to sell them in all parts of the Valley.

So closely knit into the life of the Kashmiri has the kangri become that it even has its place among religious observances. On *Makar Sankranti* Day, which falls in the cold month of January, Hindus give kangris in alms in the name of their departed ancestors. This custom is analogous to the practice followed on *Nirjala Ikadashi* in summer, when every Hindu in the plains of India gives a *gharra* of cold water in alms because it is the hot season then. The Muslims of Kashmir generally present kangris in charity to the *mullas*.

The utility of the kangri would doubtless have been reduced if its counterpart, the *phiran*, a voluminous gown, which the Kashmiri wears, had not also come into the use. There is little difference between the *phirans* worn by men and women. They button at the neck and fall to the feet. In winter *phirans* made of wool are worn ; in summer cotton *phirans*. During the past fifty years patriotic Kashmiris have crusaded against the use of the *phiran* because it had been introduced by the conquerors of Kashmir for the purpose of making the people effeminate. The change of outlook is the result of education and the opening up of the Valley. Educated Kashmiris have totally discarded the *phiran* and even the women are changing over to the graceful sari and the *shalwar* which permits greater activity. The recent entry of Kashmiris in large numbers into the military services bids fair in the near future to an entire change in the dress of the people. What place the kangri will then occupy in their lives is difficult to predict.

MOUNTAINS, LAKES & FORESTS

THIS land is a happy combination of the mighty splendour of mountains, of lovely glades and forests. The river Jhelum meanders its steady course through corn-fields into the heart of Srinagar city and, onwards, till it rushes headlong through the frowning gorges, and dashing against boulders joins the Arabian Sea through the plains of the Punjab. The onlooker will find nature wild and vibrant wherever he may go in the country. The mountains lend unique charm to the land and in this aspect of its natural beauty, Kashmir even excels the much-adored Switzerland. To a traveller hailing from the plains or other parts of India and the world, familiar with the routes leading into Kashmir, the whole sweep of towering ranges opens up before his eyes when he steps up the Pir Panjal whose peaks rise over 15,000 feet on the south-west of the country. The natural surroundings of Kashmir unfold themselves on the journey both through the Banihal and the Jhelum Valley roads. Here he observes a sharp change of scene.

The freshness and the peaceful calm of the atmosphere on these snow-peaked and pine-clad ranges as against the arid heat, din, and fatigue of the sun-baked plains of India, act as a tonic to his body and fill his mind with a feeling of pleasant contrasts. This is the first glimpse the sun-tanned visitor has of the glamour of Kashmir which he had often heard sung in prose as well as verse. In fact, no other part of the country offers such a lovely sight. As one observer says :

“The panorama of the whole range is better seen from some high projecting portion of the Pir Panjal than from any other part of Kashmir, and so seen it is unrivalled by any mountain panorama in the world.”

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On the Panjal range there are a few remarkable peaks viz., the three peaks round the Konsar Nag (12,800 ft.), Tratakoti (15,524 ft.) the highest on this range, and Romesh Thong also named Sun-set Peak by Dr. Arthur Neve when he climbed it. A feature of this mountain range is the luxuriant growth of wild flowers. Also an alpine plant called *Saussurea Sacra* grows here in abundance.

From Pir Panjal range further north, the open grassy highlands of Tosa Maidan (14,000 ft. high) catch the eye. The pastures of this vast highland are the regular haunts of the cheerful, homely shepherds who bring up their flocks for grazing. Further north-west is the Kazi Nag range—the home of the *Markhor*. It stands 12,125 feet high and is snow-covered with slopes coated with dense forests. The towering peak of Nanga Parbat (26,620 ft. high) stands as a sentinel guarding, as it were, the Valley on this side. It is an imposing sight. Far away from here are seen the Karakoram ranges also known as Mustagh, with some of its peaks rising over 25,000 ft. and among them the world-famous K2 (over 28,000 ft.), the second highest in the world, stands out boldly in its mountain glory. To the east of the Valley stands the noble, snow-clad peak of Haramukh (16,903 ft.) overlooking it. According to a local legend, as Sir Walter Lawrence puts it, 'the gleam from the vein of green emerald in the summit of the mountain renders all poisonous snakes harmless.' The famous Gangabal lake of Haramukh is regarded as sacred by Kashmiri Hindus to the same extent as Hardwar is held in India. Here also *Saussurea Sacra* grows in plenty. Another remarkable peak in the east seen from all over the city is Mahadev (13,000 ft.). In summer pilgrims climb this peak. On the lower sides of this mountain, one comes across a herb *Macrotomia benthami* in wild profusion. This herb is well-known as *Kah Zaban* or *Gaw Zaban*. It is frequently prescribed by the local physicians to ailing persons.

On the south of the Valley the peaks of Amar Nath and Kolahoi springing from the same massif are found prominent. Amar Nath stands 17,321 feet high and Kolahoi 17,800 feet.

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Kolahoi is also known as *Gwash Brari*. At dawn the radiant rays of the sun fall on this cone-like peak and the lurid glare of the dazzling snows is a sight. Here and there on this range one is attracted by wild graceful flowers, wild roses, poppies, anemones and hosts of other unknown floral varieties. Shri Amar Nath is a famous ancient shrine.

It is interesting to observe the colours these ranges richly display at certain hours of the day. These are peculiar to Kashmir mountains and are aptly described by Sir Walter Lawrence thus :

“It would be difficult to describe the colours which are seen on the Kashmir mountains. In early morning they are often a delicate semi-transparent violet relieved against a saffron sky, and with light vapour clinging round their crests. Then the rising sun deepens the shadows, and produces sharp outlines and strong passages of purple and indigo in the deep ravines. Later on it is nearly all blue and lavender, with white snow peaks and ridges under a vertical sun, and as the afternoon wears on these become richer violet and pale bronze, gradually changing to rose and pink with yellow or orange snow, till the last rays of the sun have gone, leaving the mountains dyed a ruddy crimson with the snows showing a pale creamy green by contrast.”

For its fresh-water lakes and tarns, Kashmir is known all the world over. Those lying in the Valley against the charming mountain background are : the Wular Lake, the Dal Lake and the Manasbal Lake. The Wular is the largest fresh-water lake in India and according to some, perhaps in Asia too. It is $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles long and 5 miles broad. It lies to the north-east of the Valley with mountains overlooking it. The Dal Lake lies on the suburbs of Srinagar in the east. It is at the foot of the mountain range. The lake is 4 miles long and $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles broad. Against the mountain background which is reflected in its calm expanse and enclosed by trees the lake looks superb. In summer it is a paradise for visitors who glide over its waters in *shikaras* and houseboats. The Manasbal Lake is the deepest lake in the country. Its greenish-blue waters are wondrous and beautiful.

Besides these lakes, which are fed by the melting snows

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from the mountains, there are hosts of mountain tarns formed by the glacial action and other phenomenal activities of nature. Dr. Arthur Neve, who made close, on-the-spot observation on various mountain ranges, states the phenomenal as well as the glacial action in the formation of tarns and lakes :

"At the present time are several glaciers on Haramoukh. On the south side they only descend to about 13,500 ft., but on the north 1,500 feet lower. They are fed by the large snow fields on the summit, which are of great thickness. The snow cliffs on the middle peak show a vertical thickness of nearly 200 feet. In all the surrounding valleys there are lakelets varying in size from mere ponds to sheets of water a mile or so in length and a quarter of a mile broad. Most of these occur at a height 11,500 feet. There can be no doubt that they are all due in some way to glacial action, and that they are of not very remote age.

"... It is perhaps the general opinion that glaciers may even excavate the solid rock. Tydall points out that a glacier 900 feet deep would produce a vertical pressure of 486,000 lbs. upon every square inch of its bed. ... But the small glacier on the shoulders of such mountains as Haramoukh or Tuta Kuthi would not exceed 200 feet in thickness, and would not be capable of excavating the hard rocks beneath. So the numerous tarns and lakes may be regarded as due chiefly to the formation of embankments across the line of drainage. Sometimes such embankments may have been caused by the deposit of avalanche *debris* from a side slope or by the advance of a side glacier with its lateral moraines."

The lakes and lakelets found in upper valleys around Haramoukh mountain are Gangabal, Lool Gool and Sarbal. They are at an elevation of nearly 12,000 feet above sea level. The shimmering waters lend glory to the Gangabal lake which stands at an elevation of 11,800 feet. Round about it there are two other tarns, the Lool Gool and Sarbal.

To the south east of the Pir Panjal range lies the lake of Konsar Nag (12,800 feet) surrounded by three peaks. It is fed by glaciers. It is said to be a source of the Jhelum. Of this lake Dr. Duke says :

"Allowing the peaks on either side to be 15,000 feet, this would give the lake a level of 12,500 to 13,00 feet. In the spring

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and summer the water is some 40 ft. higher than in winter. In the spring its surface is said to be covered with icebergs, which are driven about by the wind."

In the Liddar valley large glaciers are observed. On the mountain range of this valley the glaciers are found in Kolahoi. According to Dr. Neve, one glacier is 'about five miles in length and comes down as low as 11,000 feet.' From here to the east on the way to Amar Nath cave lies the famous Shesh Nag at an elevation of 14,000 feet. Glaciers are prominent in this area.

Coming into the Valley proper we find the frozen lake of Alapathar or Apharwat, well over Khilanmarg. Flowers of rainbow colours are found in wild profusion here. The mountain tarn stands at the height of about 12,500 feet. It is said to be 500 yards long and 150 yards wide. The surroundings are austere and wild. It is a popular haunt of tourists.

The nearest tarn to the city is that of Harwan on the slopes of Mahadev mountain about a mile and a half further away from the Moghul garden—Shalimar. The source of its fresh water is Tarsar, a lake on the Amar Nath mountain. Harwan looks beautiful in its sylvan surroundings. This tarn is the chief source of water-supply to the city.

Besides the above enumerated lakes and lakelets, there are scores of tarns and glaciers found in the mountain ranges around the Gurais valley, Ladakh and the Karakorams.

Kashmir is rich in forests. A variety of spruce, stately trees some of which are towering masses, grow in them, such as Blue Pine, Silver Fir, Himalayan Spruce, Birch, Maple, Beech, Hazel, Wild Oak. Almost all the mountains are coated with dense forests which, besides lending charm and healthful fragrance to the atmosphere, are a great factor of revenue to the country. The French traveller Bernier, who visited Kashmir in 1665, describes the forests he saw during his journey :

"I saw hundreds of trees plunged into abysses and mouldering with time ; while others were shooting out of the ground and

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supplying their places. I observed also trees consumed with fire ; but I am unable to say whether they were struck by lightning, or ignited by frictions when hot and impetuous winds agitate the trees, one against another, or whether, as the natives pretend, trees when grown old and dry may ignite spontaneously."

The graceful birch trees grow at high altitudes. They are found in Liddar valley, Amar Nath, Kolahoi, Gurais and Kishen Ganga valleys. These areas and the Jhelum valley, Sonamarg, Gulmarg, Kishtwar and Bhaderwah are rich in pine, fir and deodar. The best varieties of pine and deodar are found in the dense forests of Kishtwar and Bhaderwah. The Lolab valley too is thick with them. Its mountain ranges are clothed with cedar and pine forest from summit to base.

These forests are a regular haunt of lovers of sport and adventure who can find ibex, snow-leopard, musk deer, wolf, fox, red bear, markhor, blackbear, barasingha, pig, leopard, etc. Ibex is a wild goat with very long horns. It is found like the markhor among steep rocks. Snow leopards live in the high forests. Wolves and foxes are even found on low hills. The musk deer is a charming animal, having slender legs, beautiful eyes and ears.

The country holds also a variety of winged game, such as duck, goose, *chakor*, monal pheasant, partridge and snipe. These are found in low forests, in swamps and on banks of the lakes.

Kashmir is pre-eminently the land of forests which among other things are the mainstay of its economy. These are guarded against erosion and other losses so as to yield more and more income. It was not until 1891 that a separate forest department was formed under Mr. MacDonell, the first Conservator of Forests. He organised the department, marked out the forest areas and made a plan for the control of fellings. Export began to increase until timber had become a major State industry. By 1924 it had grown to such proportions that the Forest Department had to be reorganised and a uniform system of working was introduced in the Lolab area and later extended to the other forest ranges.

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Belladonna grows well among the firs, and its roots and leaves which are used in pharmaceutical processes yield about five hundred maunds a year, the price being between one hundred and fifty and two hundred rupees a maund. The Drug Research Laboratory makes considerable use of Belladonna. The scattered wild growth of this plant has not made its collection economic and nowadays it is being farmed out on a large scale at Tangmarg with considerable success.

The blue pine is one of the most useful trees. Its wood makes excellent charcoal, its resin is used for medicinal purposes, and in the mountain villages pine chips are used as lights and torches.

The silver fir has durable wood, free from knots and consequently easy to work. This tree grows to a great size, reaching in some cases to one hundred and fifty feet in length and sixteen feet in girth.

The elm is a fine tree and is used for ploughs and buildings. The young shoots are fed to the buffaloes. Boatmen like the ash tree for the paddles it produces, and walnut is prized for the making of furniture and spinning wheels, but its growth and use has not yet been fully developed.

The most magnificent tree of Kashmir, and one of the most splendid in the world, is the *Chinar*. Sir Walter Lawrence states that he once measured one which was sixty feet in girth. It is a beautiful tree, majestic, giver of perfect shade from the sun and of protection from the rain. In the autumn its reddening leaves are one of the sights which the visitors to Kashmir can never forget. Its timber is used for making oil-presses, boxes of all kinds, and furniture. The *Chinar*, and the poplar, it is said, were introduced into Kashmir by the Moghuls. The *Chinar* is a splendid monument to them.

THE TOURISTS

POPULAR tourism did not develop in Kashmir until after the first World War. Prior to that a handful of visitors would make the trip to Kashmir by relays of tonga, the little two-wheeled pony-drawn cart which today plys for passengers in the streets of Srinagar. The trip by tonga took from two to four days, depending on luck and weather ; the visitors were usually British officers, doctors, officials of some kind or medical missionaries, all of them coming to Kashmir for a rest from the heat of the plains. The motor car developed with the war and by 1920 cars were becoming commonplace. With them came the tourists. Air travel had hardly passed the military stage in Europe at that time, but it would not be long before the traveller could fly over the Banihal and see below him the twisting road descending into the bright green Valley of Kashmir.

In the twenties, the tourists were mainly officials from India but as facilities for travel increased, the tourists also increased.

As non-Kashmiris could not own land, housing became a problem which was partly overcome by the houseboat. Papier mache craftsmen, silk and shawl weavers, wood, silver and other art workers began to rely on the summer influx of visitors for the sale of their wares. More and more the families, who lived in the small cook-boats attached to the houseboats, began to look to visitors as the mainstay of their income, as did the artists and traders. Year by year this tourist traffic swelled until Kashmir has today become the tourist paradise of Asia. Families living in India came over each year, took the same houseboat, the same servants, bought things from the familiar artists and traders. More adventurous spirits went "trekking" into the mountains accompanied by experienced servants who knew every inch of

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the way, every pass, every ridge, who could cook a meal in a shower of rain and see that the visitors were dry and comfortable. Some visitors went to shoot, others to take photographs, others still to watch birds, or wander happily through the blue mountains which ringed the Valley. All went away from Kashmir and sounder both in body and mind, refreshed by its scenery in which the Moghuls had laid their beautiful gardens, and by the climate itself, balmy and always kindly.

The tourists had an effect on the artistic genius of the people. The traditional designs, painstakingly executed by craftsmen for centuries, began to change. The craftsmen had ground their own colours and had worked them into the famous papier mache objects with an expert hand. Great numbers of tourists created demand for greater production of artistic articles, and speed became more important than excellence. The aniline dye came into use, giving a colour which could never hope to rival the ground and carefully mixed colours of tradition. But it faded after a few months. Where once the artists had used real gold in some of their designs, brass came into use, it too fading quickly into tawdry trash. Many artists refused to do this, but the economic pressure was too much, and they had to compromise often. Yet among the visitors were many people of taste who refused the bright and garish trash which was being made by men who set themselves up as artists, but without the training of the famous artists of Kashmir who now had to watch the debasement of their tradition. But discriminating visitors went to the real artists year after year for the genuine Kashmiri art. They began to receive orders from Europe and America, so that the best traditions remained alive amidst the mass production of the tourist trade. This cheapening of tradition did not pay and more and more the artists saw that for every tourist who would buy a piece of gaudy, flashy work there were two or three more who knew a good thing when they saw it. It was these latter people for whom the craftsmen liked to work. But the rot had set in among the artists, the rot which always is present when the tourist is

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the immediate goal of a man who had once worked for love of the craft. Wherever there is a tourist trade in the world there will be found the cheapjack working alongside the craftsman of long tradition. Yet despite the growth of the cheap and shoddy, the fame of Kashmir craftsmanship was too well known and too deeply ingrained in the country for it to be overshadowed by the new pace which suited the cheapjack. The visitor who liked the bright shining piece of trash went away satisfied, the others kept the traditions of centuries alive.

There were many other ways in which the tourist trade affected Kashmir. There was the growth of the English language among the boatmen, the traders, the hundreds of servants who worked each summer for the tourist trade. There was, as experience grew, an intuitive understanding of the various kinds of people who came to holiday in the Valley. The strict, the weak, the thoughtful and studious, the extrovert and the introvert all had to be understood and catered for. The Kashmiri, always something of a psychologist, reached out to cater for the many types of people whom he found it was best to send away contented, for they came again. A Kashmiri never knew what his new master might consider a holiday. He might be a professor seeking for the use of a certain noun among a certain hill-people, or he might be one who broke open small stones with a hammer and examined them with profound interest. Rassul Galwan, the first Kashmiri to write in English of the masters he had known in his book, "Servant of Sahibs", tells us of one traveller he served :

"That Sahib's business", he tells us, "was to measure the people's face, feet and hands ; everybody's. The Ladakhis thought this would be for them unluck, not would let him measure them. Sahib measured me, all my body and my face, and said ; 'I will give presents to those men who will let me measure.' I said to the village men : 'This measuring business is not bad. If it be bad, I never let Sahib measure me.' And some of them said : 'Yes, we believe to you. We will let Sahib measure us'. Then I said Sahib ; 'Measure me every camp and let the villages people see. Then will find other men for Sahib, without trouble'. Sahib did this always after and got plenty people to measure."

So could the Kashmiri servant help science in its odd pursuits. Through meeting thousands of European strangers each summer and seeing them in their more relaxed and normal moments, the Kashmiri developed a diplomatic skill and a swift method of appraisal which seldom let him down. He learned to distinguish between those who knew what they sought and those who were willing to be shown. He learned slang, colloquialisms, and could converse in English of many kinds. In the houseboats the small libraries grew. Books purchased for the use of visitors mingled with those left by them on departure from the Valley. The detective story stood alongside the Greek Grammar, or "With Shotgun and Notebook Through the Sudan". The Kashmiri met the famous and the learned, the ordinary and the mundane, and understood them all.

By the time the second World War began, Kashmir was famed as the holiday centre of Asia. People of every nationality made their way here. The servants, the houseboatmen, the traders, the artists, had been collecting chits and letters of recommendation for generations. Their collections swelled. The newly arrived visitors in search of a servant found them armed with letters from Italian Dukes, German princes, British, Swedish, Danish, French and American explorers and scientists, and, more numerous, from British infantry subalterns and tried engineers and other officials who had been made comfortable by these servants.

The peak years of the tourist trade were reached in the second World War when, in one year alone, close on forty thousand visitors flocked in to the Valley by road and air. Great numbers of them were American soldiers with plenty to spend. The clubs, the houseboats, the hotels were full. Money flowed. The craftsmen worked overtime. Kashmir had never known anything like it before. The aeroplane over the Valley became a familiar sight and soon was to become a commonplace. Winter sports at Gulmarg, not far from Srinagar, grew in popularity; so that the normally quiet

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winter could expect its flow of tourists. The Americans carried the news about Kashmir to South East Asia Command so that American Army planes carried greater and greater numbers of soldiers on leave into the Valley. Every Kashmiri connected with the tourist trade was prosperous, but he knew too, in his shrewd way, that it was too good to last. But while the war lasted, it was good. Artists made many connections with America and the flow of art goods to that country increased, as they did to Europe. By 1946 the tourist trade was on the verge of change as history began to weave a new India.

The summer of 1947 drifted slowly away in sunlight. After August 15, Pakistan was a new State, free, as was the new India. By October Pakistan had enforced a blockade of Kashmir, and thousands of fierce tribesmen were pouring into the Valley, looting and destroying as they made for Srinagar. Kashmir became a battle-field. The tourist trade became a memory. Then came the cease-fire in January 1949. During those two years the Kashmiris who had lived on the tourist trade knew lean times. Some traders were financially finished. Others lived on the wealth they had accumulated in the years of the second World War. But after the cease-fire, the tourist trade began to revive. The Valley was too famous, its climate too rare and kind to be ignored. From India a slow trickle of people began visiting the Valley in the summer. The complete reorganisation of the transport service ensured greater efficiency and comfort for the visitor. The aircraft was faster, but those who liked to travel overland used the new luxurious bus services. From a couple of thousands in 1949 the numbers of visitors slowly increased from summer to summer till the figure rose to 8000 in 1951. And in 1952 it was still bigger. The tourist trade will increase year by year. There are many thousands of people in India and Pakistan who ache to visit Kashmir, people who are tired of propaganda and war threats, and need a holiday in the Valley which is famed for its recuperative calm.

HOUSEBOATS

LITTLE could the traveller have imagined that the long and tortuous road going up hill and down dale, over the 9,000 feet Banihal Pass, would bring him to a country full of boats and boatmen. But odd as it may seem, they have ever been in Kashmir, a country situated more than five thousand feet above the sea level in the heart of the majestic Himalayas. The reason is not far to seek. In very ancient times this Valley of 80 miles length and 40 miles breadth was a vast mountain lake until, as the tradition goes, the waters were drained out by Kashyap Rishi, after whose name the country is called Kashmir. The *Rajatarangini* often mentions *Nishads*, the boatmen and the boat bridges. After the waters of this inland sea were drained, there still remained big lakes and one—the Wular—is still the largest in India. From a cursory glance at the map of the Valley it will be found that apart from the lakes and the main river, Jhelum, there are numerous rivulets which are navigable by tiny boats. These streams and canals serve the population as highways and the boats with their numerous designs, sizes and varieties form an essential part of communication system of the country. We learn from the *Ain-i-Akbari* that “boats were the centre upon which all commerce moved, and that in Kashmir there was made a model of a ship that astonished everyone who saw it”. All the important towns and cities in the Valley have been located from ancient times on river banks. At some places there are whole villages in which the means of communication between house and house is only a boat. The city of Srinagar has aptly been called the Venice of the East.

The Kashmiri takes to a boat as naturally as an Englishman to the sea. His staple food—rice—is carried to his doorsteps in a big barge, *bahts*. His fuel comes to him in a *khachu* and his earthen utensils, his vegetables, mats,

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milk and other essentials of life in a *dembnav*—a small version of a *khachu*, whereas a *shikara* serves him as an everyday conveyance from his home to the office or the market place and vice versa. It is beyond the comprehension of a Kashmiri who has not gone out of the Valley—and the majority fall into that category—to think of a people or country without a boat or a river. He has a short and apt word—*ghairi ghat*—(away from the *ghat* or the river bank)—to disdainfully describe a place as deserted and unfit for human habitation.

Endowed as a Kashmiri is with a practical as well as an artistic sense, it is but natural that in building his boats he has attained a perfection in balancing and harmonising both. "The Kashmiris", says Canon Tyndale-Biscoe, "have their special way of building boats, and very clever they are at that art. I have always been interested in boats and boat-building but I have never come across boats built as in Kashmir". An ordinary boat is built in the form of a big box of wooden planks 2 to 3 inches in thickness. The bottom is composed of planks 6 to 9 feet long and about 3 feet wide which are dove-tailed together and fastened by iron staples and nails. These staples are from 3 to 4 inches wide and are hammered in almost red-hot. Immediately water is poured on them when they cool and contract and thus have a great clenching power. When the bottom is thus completed the sides of similar planks 3 to 4 feet in width are joined and fastened to the bottom and in order to make this great box rigid, four or five staples are placed in position at equal distances. Now caulkers are put on to work and very clever they are at this job. They pack the seams with Indian jute mixed with *pits* or water rush grass to make the boat entirely waterproof. The boat requires a renewal of this packing every third or fourth year. When she is afloat the cabin is built on according to the use the boat is to be put.

There are many kinds of boats, all flat bottomed. The greater portion of the grain and wood imported into Srinagar is brought in large barges called *bahts* with a loading

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capacity of 800 to 1000 maunds. It has a high prow and stern. Aft is a cabin with two rooms in which the boatman and his family live, and the hold in which the grain is stored is roofed in with thatch. One of the most common forms of boats is the *doonga* 50 to 60 feet in length and about six to eight feet in width in the centre. It has a sloping roof of matting and side-walls of a similar material. The boatmen live in the aft of the *doonga* and rent out the remaining portion to passengers or visitors. The *shikara* is a small boat very useful for short journeys rapidly paddled by one or more boatmen. Most of them are fitted with artistically embroidered cushions and spring seats. The *dembnav* is a tiny dugout in which vegetables are brought to the market by the amphibious denizens of the Dal lake.

Before the European visitors began to come to Kashmir on holiday in increasing numbers, the *doonga* was used by Kashmiris for long journeys and picnic trips to the Dal lake. It was during the nineties of the last century that this boat was frequently used by the visitors for short sojourns as the best alternative to a tent. Due to lack of accommodation suitable to them the visitors were put to great inconvenience and as the Maharaja's Government would not allow them to own or build houses in Kashmir, the *doonga* was by and by transformed into a modern houseboat. But the credit of building the first houseboat strangely enough goes to a member of the Kashmiri Pandits, a community which had from ancient times nothing to do with the profession of boat-building or boatmen. Pandit Naraindas came of a respectable family and was one of the first five Kashmiris to learn English from Rev. Doxey, the founder of the famous Kashmir Mission School in 1882. Declining to enter the traditional profession of quill-driving he, after leaving the school, started a small store to cater to the needs of the European visitors. But unfortunately his shop was burnt down and finding it difficult to obtain a suitable shop he removed whatever he could save from the fire into a *doonga*. To his agreeable surprise he found that a *doonga* served as a better shop since

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it could be moored at a convenient and central place to the visitors. But rain and snow played havoc with his stores and he got an idea of having planks and shingle to replace the matting walls and roof of the *doonga*. When the first boat was ready and afloat, an officer took a fancy to it and purchased it at a handsome profit. Pandit Naraindas found that boat-building was a better business proposition than running a European store and soon he became the premier boat-builder of Kashmir, his yard turning out many a famous and well-built boat. His idea was later on improved upon by Colonel R. Sartorius, V.C., Sir R. Harvey, Bart., and Mr. Martyn Kennard. The latter built the famous two-storeys houseboat, "Victory", in 1918 which is standing majestically on the river at Raja Bagh and which no visitor misses to see and admire. Most of the well-built and luxuriously furnished houseboats were built and owned by Europeans. The Indian visitor accustomed to live on land and away from waterways is rather out of element when he and his family have to spend a summer holiday in a houseboat.

Most of these houseboats are from 65 to 95 feet in length and about 14 feet in width. They are partitioned into a sitting, a dining and two or three bedrooms and a pantry with the required number of bathrooms and lavatories. They are equipped with modern furniture and many have sanitary-fittings as well. The ventilation and lighting is ample, thanks to large glazed windows and doors. The ceilings are invariably of the Kashmiri *Khatamband* type, made of tiny thin carved pieces of wood arranged in beautiful geometrical designs. The walls and partitions are built of grooved and framed panels fixed to the posts running from the bottom to the roof. The roof is covered by corrugated iron sheets over which a flat deck is made of wooden planks and carved railings. This deck is accessible by a staircase running up from the pantry. The boats are built of deodar wood and are rarely painted, the natural colour and grain and the sweet fragrance of the wood lending a charm of its own to the houseboat.

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There are about two thousand houseboats and first class *doongas* on the waters of Kashmir to serve visitors during the summer season. Every boat may be called a hotel in miniature, since the boatman can arrange all board and lodging for you at rates varying from 6 to 15 rupees per head per diem.

It is really a pleasure to study the names of these houseboats—some of them poetical, some odd and others comic. “Lalla Rookh” and “Tahiti” bring to one’s mind a wealth of pleasant memories whereas “Gul-o-Bulbul”, “Iris” and “Grey Dawn” make one want to burst into song. There are some which at once suggest some historical event, e.g. “The Victory 1918”, “The Duke of Windsor”, “The Republic of India”. How a particular name came to be given to a boat is always an interesting story. Ask the *hanji* about it and his immediate reply would be something like this :

“When this boat was built, I asked the first tenant to suggest a name. Finally after days of hard thinking and turning of the pages of several books, he chose this name and when I put on the nameplate, you should have seen how proud he looked. It has been a lucky name for the boat and I always bless that visitor.”

As you are paddled in comfortable *shikara* through the lovely Chinar Bagh and the Dal Lake, you come across houseboats of all sizes and ages bearing all the beautiful names that could possibly have occurred to you—*Swift, Pinafore, Parrot, Golden Fleece, Eagle, Alexandra, Dawn, Marie Elsie, Normandy, Dongola, Sheela, March Hare, Mayflower, Neptune, etc., etc.*

Living in a boat is quite different from living on land. There are few more pleasant experiences than being towed up the river in your houseboat. When travelling from one place to another, there is no packing to be done : you simply give the word and your house moves to the spot your heart desireth. Whereas you have to go to the bazar or market place when living on land, the bazar comes to you even though your boat may be moored at the farthest and the most secluded

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nook of the Lake. You awaken in the morning with the long and melodious chant—"Phoolwala hazoor"—of the flower vendor and a peep at his tiny boat reveals a miniature bed of tastefully arranged roses, hyacinths, jasmynes, and so on. Next come the fruitwala, milkman, baker with his delicious cakes and pastries and so on ; and before you are up and tidy, your breakfast table is amply provided for and the day's provisions stored. The real shopping fun begins in the afternoon when your boat is surrounded by merchants selling the famous artistic goods of Kashmir. A slight nod of your head brings in a swarm of these vendors and as if by a touch of the magic wand your sitting room is turned into an art emporium. Much as you may resist, you find in the long run that you have purchased a good number of articles.

No description of boats or of Kashmir can be complete without a word about that virile, hardworking and much-maligned community—the hanjis or boatmen. It is an ancient race but due to the fluctuating fortunes and utter lack of education they have acquired a "quarrelsome and lying disposition." When all is said and done it seems they are more sinned against than sinning. Many hanjis have served their masters most faithfully and honestly and a glance at the numerous testimonials of any hanji will bear out this assertion. There is no office useful to a visitor which a *hanji* cannot fill at a short notice. He can at once be a first class cook or an accomplished butler, a perfect guide as well as an expert *shikari*. Here are a few typical testimonials selected at random. Writing to a boatman in 1947, two years after his holiday in Kashmir, an American said :

"It was in October, 1945 that I had the extreme privilege of spending two weeks in your lovely country of Kashmir. In the many months which have followed, my heart and thoughts have often wandered back renewing the many pleasant memories. Foremost in mind is the multitudinous considerations and hospitalities so kindly offered by the people. Then there follows the many fine arts and products which I have come to hold in such high esteem ; the natural beauties of the country, the lakes, the streams, the mountains, the gardens, all of which are the envy of many

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other countries. Yet indeed Kashmir has a strong hold on the strings of my heart. I could ask for nothing more pleasing to my soul than the opportunity to live again in your delightfully inspiring land."

Again, a high official of the Education Department of Malaya writing in 1941 says :

"We spent two months in the houseboat *Normandy*. The manji is a good cook. He gave us plenty of variety in menus. I did two treks of a fortnight each. The manji proved an excellent organiser and was invaluable both enroute and in camp."

Here is an English lady who enjoyed her visit. To her boatman she wrote :

"I really am most extremely grateful to you for all you did for me in Kashmir. It is the first time in three years that I have had a really pleasant and successful holiday with no worries or troubles of any kind, and I feel that it is entirely due to your care and trouble in making such an excellent *bandobust* for me."

Again, Canon Biscoe writing in his book "Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade" says :

"I respect the boatmen in their work as boatmen, for they have delighted me over and over again in their knowledge of boat-raft, for they are kings at it. Then again they can work hard. They will tow your boat upstream all day, and if really necessary, will continue all night."

SHAWL-MAKING

SHAWL-MAKING was for long synonymous with Kashmir. The Kashmir shawl was renowned for its fine texture, charm of colour and shade. The shawl industry of Kashmir in the opinion of some observers is as old as the Epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata. Similarly it is said that "the beautiful shawls of Kashmir . . . adorned the proudest beauties at the court of Caesar when the barbarians of Britain were painted savages". Whatever be the truth about the origin of this primitive industry, the fact remains that the country was famed for its excellent shawls though they were also produced elsewhere in the world, for example in Persia and in some parts of India, but they never compared favourably with those produced by the Kashmir craftsmen. The three staple commodities having alliteration in their names for which the country is proverbial and frequently referred to by observers are *Shawl*, *Shali* and *Shalgam*.

But all this excellence in art was attained at the cost of something more precious than art itself—and that was human life. The working of the 'time-honoured' shawl system is as interesting as it is painful. The life led by these shawl weavers is in sharp contrast with the exquisite beauty of the shawls they produced. They worked for low, starvation wages in most unhealthy and unpleasant conditions of life. Their misery and abject servitude made an observer like Robert Thorp lament in 1870.

"Do they never picture to themselves these low-roomed, ill-ventilated abodes, where the loom-workers sit at their forced labour day after day, toiling for their miserable pittance? Those gaily coloured threads of wool are not the only ones which these looms weave to their completion; Threads of life, more costly than those of the softest poshm, whose price will be demanded by Heaven yet, are spun out there on the loom of sickness and suffering." From "*Cashmere Misgovernment*" by Robert Thorp.

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It will be well here to describe first the circumstances in which the shawls were produced, and at what cost, before the shawl-making process itself is described. The whole shawl system was controlled by the government. A department called the Dagshawl was set up under which the two subdivisions of the shawl system, namely, the loom system and hand-work system worked. This department acted only as the "spectre of a godless tyranny" stamping freedom and initiative from the weavers with "machine-like efficiency". The machinery of the Dagshawl comprised elements who placed personal profits above patriotism and human feeling, and battered on the wretched weavers. The Dagshawl was placed in charge of a person called a *Darogha*. The function of this institution was to mark the shawls and affix the Government stamp on each manufactured shawl. Besides the stamp fee a tax was also levied on the shawl. No shawl maker could escape this practice with impunity. The Government placed persons on duty called *Shaqdars* who had to detect the smuggling cases that were likely to occur. Robert Thorp describes the process of marking the shawls manufactured by *Karkhandars* under the loom system thus :

" Before a loom shawl can be legally made, a small piece of the intended degree of fineness must be brought to the Dagshali. The proposed size is named, and the price is thus calculated ; the piece then receives the Government stamp, and is laid up in the Dagshali. The karkhandar receives a paper describing the shawl and giving the date of the stamp, for which he pays at the time Rs. 18/12 per cent on the price of the shawl ; when the shawl is nearly completed, it is taken to the Dagshali and the stamped price is worked into it. . . . "

(Ibid).

Regarding the levy of taxes on these shawl manufacturers, he writes :

"The annual tax levied on each karkhandar upto the 1st December 1867, was Rs. 47/8/- (Chilkee rupees) for each shawl baf in his employ ; from that date a reduction was made of 11 chilkee rupees."

(Ibid)

The fate of the hand-workmen was sealed in a similar manner. They were directly under the Dagshawl. They

SHAWL-MAKING

could not sell any piece without the stamp being affixed on it. According to Robert Thorp the hand-made Pashmina piece was stamped twice. When it was a plain piece, the stamp was affixed on it and the tax at the rate of $10\frac{1}{2}$ chilkee rupees levied for $4\frac{1}{2}$ yards. When it was dyed and the needle-work was done on it, a second stamp was affixed. By that time the rate of tax was 18 chilkee rupees for $4\frac{1}{2}$ yards. From this it only follows that ultimately the pressure of these taxes was borne by the shawl-weaver who smarted under it. It was humanly impossible to live on the paltry sum that he got for the hard work that he had put into the shawl. This sorry state of affairs is abundantly clear from the following account of Moorcroft—as referred to by Lawrence in the 'Valley of Kashmir' :

"All the facts connected with this interesting and once most important industry will be found in Moorcroft's Travels, Vol. II, ch. iii. Though it was a lucrative industry to the State, which took Rs. 30/- per annum from employers of shawl-weavers per head, an impost of 20 per cent on the manufactured article, an export duty of Rs. 7/15/- on a long shawl and Rs. 5/13/- on a square shawl, it was poor industry for the weavers. In 1871 one or two annas per diem was the ordinary wage for a weaver, and Moorcroft noticed that the general earnings of an industrious and expert spinner were Rs. 1/8/- per mensem and probably less."

Nor was this all. These poor creatures could not get a full meal, not to speak of other amenities of life. The Government sold grain to the manufacturers of the shawls per loom at a rate higher than the market. The quantity given to them was so meagre that they could not keep body and soul together. They had to live on mulberry fruits and other coarse edibles that came their way for many months of the year. Misery was written large on the pinched faces of these sallow-complexioned, weak-framed human beings. And what was worse, they could not relinquish this profession, as that would mean a tremendous loss to the Government. Only death could relieve them from this miserable condition. The result of this strangulation was that the rate of starvation deaths gained momentum in the country. Pandit Anand

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Koul has furnished detailed information regarding the system of the sale of grains to the loom-workers and the taxes on pashmina fabrics.

“During the Afghan period saffron and grains, which the State got as its own share, were sold by the State at higher than the market rates to the inhabitants, of course against their wishes. The selling was called *Niliv* or *Tarah*. The loss that this system entailed on the people was ruinous. It told very severely on the shawl-weavers who then numbered 12,000. In the time of the Afghan Governor, Haji Karim Dad (1776-83 A.D.), this practice was abolished and in lieu of it the shawl-weavers were made to pay a small tax which was called *Qasuri-shali*. Subsequently, Haji Karim Dad, at the suggestion of his Peshkar, Pandit Dila Ram Quli, abolished the *Qasuri-shali*, but levied a tax on each piece of Pushmina manufactured.....Azim Khan revived the old *Niliv* system and gave ten kharwars of shali per loom. The shawl produced on the loom was taken by the State and the price of *Shali* together with the amount of duty leviable on the shawl, was recovered from the price of the shawl. When Kashmir passed into the hands of the Sikhs, there had remained only six thousand looms and yet the duty was further raised to three annas per rupee *ad valorem* and twelve kharwars of *Shali* at three rupees per kharwar of which the actual market price was only one rupee—were issued for each loom.”

In this way these taxes and the *Niliv* system continued from king to king till the shawl-weavers became paupers and it was in the year 1877 A.D. that this tax and the *Niliv* system were abolished, and later the remaining customs-duty also.

Like every other piece of invention there is a story behind the introduction of the words ‘Shawl, Du Shawli’ and also of colour patterns. The story is referred to by Pandit Anand Koul in his book ‘Jammu and Kashmir State’ which is the source of this piece of information. Mirza Haider of Kashgar was the *Wazir* of Sultan Nazuk Shah who ruled Kashmir in 1540 A.D. He had a cook named Nagz Beg who came from Khoqand (Central Asia). One day Nagz Beg presented a well-made *pashmina* piece to his master. Mirza Haider was very delighted to see it and asked what it was. The cook readily replied ‘a shawl’ which the people of

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Khoqand call a blanket in their own tongue. Mirza Haider further inquired if the piece was single or double. Nagz Beg said that it was 'Du Shawl' (a double piece). Since then it is said that the term 'Shawli, Du Shawli' became known in the country. Haider Malik rewarded his servant and asked him to prepare another such piece for him. It may be mentioned here that the shawl industry of Kashmir witnessed many vicissitudes of fortune and it may be that in the time of Mirza Haider it was a rarity and when he was presented with a shawl it gave him delight when he saw it. But there is sufficient evidence to prove that the industry flourished in the country long before.

Nagz Beg was a wonderful man. He was resourceful and inventive. The story goes that one day a weaver was slapped in the face in his presence. His nose bled and the drops fell on the *pashmina* piece and it looked charming with the red colour. The incident inspired Nagz Beg who was observing all this. He successfully developed a pattern of variegated colours while weaving a *pashmina* fabric. This was a laudable contribution indeed ! And this is the story behind the introduction of colour patterns in the shawls. The tomb of this man stands at Babribag near Zadibal, a couple of miles to the north of Srinagar.

This oblong piece of *Pashmina* known as Shawl is of two varieties : (a) Kani Shawl (b) Amli Shawl. Kani Shawl is woven on the loom. Under the loom system, various pieces are woven separately and then stitched together so neatly and skilfully that it looks all of a piece without any stitch visible. On a loom quite a number of weavers work. In the Amli Shawl the *pashmina* fabric is embroidered with needles working to a pattern. In this the *sadabaf* first weaves the fabric and then the *rafoogar* does the needle-work. The outline of the pattern is drawn by the local *naqash* and the weaver deftly uses threads with various colours working to the original pattern. The weaver has his own knack quite peculiar to him. He does not follow the original pattern. He gets the pattern translated on paper by a person who is called

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khahan wol. The translation of the original pattern is symbolic and so manipulated as to serve a key-board to the weaver who while seated on the loom uses threads and colours accordingly. So used are these weavers to this peculiar method that they work mechanically and with such agility that the beholder is amazed. This art, according to Pt. Anand Koul, was invented in the time of Azad Khan, the Afghan Governor of Kashmir (1783-1785 A.D.), by a son of the soil popularly known as Ala Baba. The innovation struck him when he observed the clawmarks left by a fowl on a plain sheet of cloth. It suggested to him a design which he worked with needles. His experiment was a success and in this way the art of Amli-shawl-making was given a good start. Ala Baba's descendents are alive today and still pursuing their forefather's profession.

Thus with the advance of time and fashion the Amli shawl was developed into various designs and patterns. It sprang into favour with ladies who cherished it as a part of their trousseau. The impress of the country's beauty is often found in various pieces of art. In embroidered shawls the pattern of ornamentation is inspired by the flora and fauna and the splendid scenery in which the country abounds. About some elaborate patterns it is opined thus : 'The well-known cone pattern with flowing curves...and minute diaper of flowers, is elaborated in the most artistic manner and combined with floral decorations and a maze of scrolls. It has been called the Persian cone or flame pattern. The cone, I think, is a purely Kashmiri idea. Some say the design was conceived from the windings of the Jhelum river and the scrolls were in imitation of the ripples of water caused by the flow near the bridges on the Jhelum. It may, therefore, be called the 'Jhelum pattern.' Sir Walter Lawrence reproduces the opinion of an expert regarding a design of shawl developed under the patronage of the Moghuls :

"According to M. Dauvergne the Kashmiri shawl dated back to the times of the Emperor Baber. The Mughal emperors wore on their turbans a jewelled ornament known as *jigha*, in

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shape like an almond. On the top of the *jigha* was an aigrette of feathers. An Andijani weaver imitated the design of the *jigha* in a scarf made for the Emperor Baber, and was so successful that the *jigha* became the fashionable design in all scarves and shawls. Many Andijani weavers were brought down to India and Kashmir by the Mughal emperors, and the *jigha* design was adopted in art centres in India and also in Persia. Many of the small carpets of Persia represent the *jigha*, and at the present time there is a class of shawls and *butadars* made in Srinagar entirely for the Persian market”

“The first shawls which reached Europe were brought by Napoleon, at the time of the campaign in Egypt, as a present to the Empress Josephine, and from that time shawls became fashionable. In those days the *jigha* varied from 1 foot in depth to 18 inches, but later on General Ventura—then in Mahraja Ranjit Singh’s service—sent to France shawls in which the *jigha* had attained large proportions. These shawls were known as Palms. They were 10 to 11 feet long by 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide. The centre was plain, usually black in colour, the borders were covered with elongated *jighas* or palms in parallel rows”

In spite of the fact that the industry witnessed many ups and downs the shawl attained heights of perfection during various periods of Kashmir’s history. For instance under the Moghuls this industry received great patronage and encouragement as mentioned above. The shawl improved in quality and fineness of texture to such an extent that when pressed, it could pass through a finger-ring. It was, therefore, known as ring-shawl and prized everywhere. Bernier visited Kashmir in the company of Aurangzeb in 1665 A.D. and he writes :

“What may be considered peculiar to Kashmir, and the staple commodity which particularly promotes the trade of the country and fills it with wealth, is the prodigious quantity of shawls which they manufacture and which gives occupation even to little children.”

Under the Afghans the industry made further progress. George Forster who visited Kashmir in 1783 A.D. wrote :

“In Kashmir are seen merchants and commercial agents of most of the principal cities of Northern India, also of Tartary, Persia and Turkey who, at the same time, advance their fortunes and enjoy the pleasure of a fine climate and country over which are profusely spread the various beauties of nature”.

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During the Sikh period the shawl flourished. Moorcroft who visited Kashmir in 1822 A.D. writes :

“The whole value of shawl-goods manufactured in Kashmir may be estimated at about thirty-five lakhs of rupees per annum.”

Similarly, Lawrence says :

“The best shawls ever made in Kashmir were manufactured in the time of Maharaja Ranbir Singh between the years 1865-72. They were very fine in texture, very soft in colour, and of the most elaborate and graceful patterns, of a purely Eastern style of decoration.”

It was after 1870 when the war between France and Germany was going on that the demand for shawls waned and the industry declined. The subsequent famine in Kashmir in 1877-79 was its ultimate doom.

The present Government has taken steps to preserve the traditional arts of Kashmir by establishing Emporia in various parts of India which organise sales, etc., thereby saving the indigenous artisan and craftsman from the middleman and official bullies who in the past sapped their very vitality.

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THE ploughman for centuries plodded his way back and forth across his fields and beneath his feet lay wealth which could change the hard conditions of his existence. The full extent of this wealth is not known, but what is known of it is sufficient to justify the hope that one day Jammu and Kashmir may have her own large-scale industries.

In the past geologists made surveys of certain areas in the State and reported favourably on what they found, but for one reason or another, no action was taken. The wealth in the earth still awaits its exploitation. It will need skilled men, money and effort to exploit the country's mineral potential. By examining the reports made by geologists we can get an idea of what that shape may one day become.

The economic minerals of the State may be classified as under :

- a. Fuels.
- b. Ore deposits.
- c. Precious and semi-precious gemstones.
- d. Other minerals.

(a) *Fuels.*

Coal : Coal fields have long been discovered and are located in Jammu. The experts have recognized the geological age of these coal outcrops as belonging to the Eocene age. Mr. R. R. Simpson, along with his two Assistants, Mr. Steward and Mr. Godwin, made an on-the-spot investigation of the Jammu coalfields and the full account of his survey-work together with the results is found in the "Memoirs, Geological Survey of India, Vol. XXXII, 1904". At that time it was proposed by some to work the coal mines, but the idea was not appreciated by Mr. Simps on who did not think

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it commercially sound in view of certain difficulties and handicaps. He wrote :

“Although the quality of the Coal in this field (Kalakot Coalfield)—is marketable, yet its variability in thickness, the disturbed condition of the rocks, the necessity for deep shafts and pumping, together with the difficulty of access, render it possible to look upon the exploitation of this field as a commercial venture with any prospect of success.”

So the proposal was dropped. Later, another geological expert, Mr. C. S. Middlemiss, started survey work on the basis of the investigations of his predecessor. The incidental discoveries of the ores of aluminium, copper, zinc, lead, etc., compelled him to view the Jammu coals from quite a different angle, as he thought coal to be very useful and essential in the various chemical preparations and processes of development of these ores, e.g., in roasting, smelting, mining, etc. So instead of being “commercially unsound”, Mr. Middlemiss thought this coal to be very useful. Middlemiss reported :

“During recent years, however, discoveries by the Mineral Survey of ores of aluminium followed very recently by those of copper, zinc and lead (in addition to those of iron already known to some extent), have caused me to regard the coal of Jammu from a new point of view ; because, for the development of these ores, coal will naturally be a great asset in the processes of roasting, smelting and reduction, as well as possibly for power at the mines and for transportation purpose.....Incidentally also it might be found that proposals for working the coal which in 1904 did not recommend themselves to Mr. Simpson as being commercially sound, might, on revision in the light of the above new facts, appear more promising.”

So in the light of new facts Mr. Middlemiss began the re-survey work of Jammu coals both in regard to quality and quantity. The following is the result of Mr. Middlemiss' survey in the Jammu coalfields from his own report :

1. Kalakot Coalfield	..	9,000,000 tons
2. Metka Coalfield	..	5,000,000 „
3. Mahogala Coalfield	..	4,000,000 „
4. Chakar Coalfield	..	9,000,000 „

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5. Other areas west of the Chenab river	..	6,000,000 tons
6. Dhansal-Sawalkot	..	9,000,000 „
		<hr/> 42,000,000 tons <hr/>

He further observed that if the mines were worked by modern methods, then instead of 42,000,000 tons it would be even possible to expect 100,000,000 tons as some of the unfinished parts of the areas had not been included in the estimates.

The main factor that has been stressed by the geological specialists for the effective working of minerals is the superior means of communication. The coalfields are not linked with other areas of the province by proper roads and for the all-round development of the mining industry, this factor is most crucial. Regarding communications, Mr. Middlemiss observes :

“At present there are no rail or road communications beyond Jammu in the direction of these coalfields, and only a canal and unmetalled road are part of the way as far as Akhnoor on the Chenab River. The survey works done on the Coalfields so far, and all the proposed work for the future that may be done towards proving Coal, are necessarily based on the assumption that proper communications will be established”

“In setting about the work of communications it will be much better to go straight to the heart of things by building a railway to Riasi, than to accept any temporary and cheap palliative, such as a short rail connection from Jangal Gali *via* Tikhri to Jammu Tawi”

Elsewhere in his report he says :

“But it remains to be seen whether within the next few years some reliable form of air service will not supersede railways and roads in complex hilly tracts such as these The air offers unrestricted routes, and coal by this means could equally well be distributed to any metallurgical centre where it was wanted.”

(b) *Lignite.*

The non-metallic mineral, lignite or “brown-coal of the Kashmir Valley” was after long investigation found to occur

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in the geological formation of karewas. It was located at Nichahom in the Handwara area and at Raithan and Laoyalab in the Shaliganga area. Mr. Middlemiss observes that the lignitic coal is found in abundance and there is sufficient reason for its being exported provided the quality proves to be good enough. According to his estimates the amount of lignite available in Nichahom area is equal to 80,000,000 tons and the Shaliganga area as tentatively estimated can yield about 48,000,000 tons ; and there is still more to be explored elsewhere.

He regards the quality of Kashmir lignite as moderate, owing to the presence of ash in high percentage. But the calorific values of Kashmir lignite compare favourably with that of Burma lignite and are just a little below the British lignite. The prospective utility of this mineral has been described thus :

"It will be fairly obvious that the Valley of Kashmir, separated as it is by 200 miles of mountain road from the railway system of India, must be able advantageously to sell the distillation products of the lignite, namely motor spirit, kerosene, diesel-engine oil, lubricating oil, pitch, phenols and sulphate of ammonia, all made on the spot, at a reasonably good profit in competition with imported articles that have had to travel all this distance by road in addition to the previous distances by rail The phenols when emulsified will produce a powerful disinfectant. The final residue in the form of soft pitch could be used for roads or for briquetting lignite (after conversion into hard pitch) into a form of patent fuel."

Regarding the improvement of communications he remarks :

"The Karewa formation, in which the lignite occurs, is all in fairly easy country descending gently towards the Jhelum river. The various mines could be connected up with the navigable waters of the Jhelum river by roads, tramways or wire ropeways. Once in boats on the river, the lignite or its distillation products could easily and very cheaply be carried to any part of the Valley where there would be a good local market"

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(c) *Ore Deposits.*

Bauxite : This ore had escaped the attention of the specialists of the Geological Survey of India till it was discovered later by Mr. Middlemiss in 1919 near the Chakar village in the district of Riasi. After close examination of the whole area of Riasi, bauxite was located in the following places as reported by him :

1. Chakar and Chhaparbari.
2. Sangar Marg.
3. Panhasa.
4. Salal.
5. Jangalgali—Sukhwalgali.

The following table as worked out by Mr. Middlemiss shows in detail the geological formation and age of this *ore of aluminium* as bauxite was afterwards known :

<i>Formation and Age</i>		<i>Description</i>	<i>Thickness</i>
Muree Series (Formation U. Tertiary) age.		Sandstone and shales of purple and chocolate colours.	Very great thickness but unmeasured. Top not seen.
Nummulitic series (Eocene) age.		Concretionary lime-stones and shales.	About 400 ft.
Coal Measures (Eocene) age.		Carbonaceous shales with coal beds and ironstone bands and lenticles.	About 120 ft.
Bauxite series.		Bauxite, bauxitic clays and kaolin, with local ironstone and a little coal.	4 to 24 ft. and over.
Breccia (Age unknown)	(Age unknown)	Chert fragments mainly in calcareous and siliceous cement.	20 to 30 ft.
Great limestone (age unknown but probably older than Trias).		Massive grey limestone with bands of chert. No organic remains.	Of great but unknown thickness. Base not seen.

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Nearness of coal deposits and water power is certainly an excellent feature of the Jammu bauxite. On this point Mr. Middlemiss remarks :

"A favourable feature of the bauxite area of Jammu is that excellent-quality anthracitic coal occurs in association with those areas. This coal, which is well-known, lies everywhere in the overlying strata within 100 feet or so of the bauxite spreads. Besides being required in the preliminary roasting of the ore, coal on the spot is a general asset for any works and for transport purposes

"Water power is available very centrally at Dhian Garh on the Chenab river, a short distance above Riasi and quite close to the Salal bauxite field There is no doubt, therefore, that in the immediate neighbourhood of the bauxite fields, these two main factors exist for reducing the ore to the metallic state, namely a reliable and abundant source of electricity and suitable coal."

Finally he strikes a note of caution regarding the working of this ore as "it will involve commercial strategy and generalship of a high order, which only men of experience can tackle".

(d) *Iron.*

That this ore was locally worked in the olden days is sufficiently testified by the Ramban bridge over the Chenab river. The bridge is stated to have been made of iron of local origin obtained from the Chakar and Salal areas. A remarkable feature of the iron ores here is that they occur interstratified with the limestone compositions of the coal belts. A rich and massive deposit of hematite containing about 60% of iron was discovered in 1925 to occur at Khandli in Rajouri. As stated by Mr. Middlemiss, the iron ore of Matah village on the right bank of the river Chenab occurs in the 7 feet thick bed "interstratified with the great limestone of the Riasi dome". The suggestions regarding the superior means of communications are the same as already given in connection with coal.

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(e) *Copper.*

Like the iron deposits, copper deposits were also worked in the country in ancient times. This ore is found in Sumabal (Kashmir Valley), Kishtwar, Kargil, Zanskar, Gainta (Riasi district) and Sukhwal Gali. Later, in the Sindh Valley it was discovered in Ganjwan Nala, Hangar and Tram Karam. The information regarding these places in Sindh Valley as reported by Mr. Middlemiss was obtained from notes made by the late Sir Amar Singh, K.C.S.I., the then Commander-in-Chief in Kashmir.

(f) *Lead and Silver.*

The lead-silver ore deposits 'in the form of galena' are located in Bunyar forests, at Ramsu, Kotli and Kishtwar.

(g) *Zinc.*

Zinc blende was discovered in 1925 in the hamlet of Lower Darabi in the Anji Valley. Large boulders of zinc measuring 200 cubic feet were first found in the stream bed of Anji river. It appears in the great limestone formation from Riasi to Darabi and from Darabi to Gianta.

The working of this mine at a profit, is uncertain. Yet the communication factor is essential as Mr. Middlemiss observes :

" To work the ore profitably on a rather small scale for the extraction of the metal (notwithstanding the purity of the ore and the relative ease with which large masses of the vein material with its calcite gangue can be broken up and hand-sorted) would involve metallurgical operations novel to India. Should, however, the smelting of zinc blende eventually be started in some part of India (chiefly in order to treat the large quantity of zinc concentrates from the Bawdwin lead-zinc mines of Burma), it might be possible to experiment with consignments of our remarkably pure Darabi ore with some success The above problematical proceedings in any case are again obviously dependent on transport facilities being provided from the mines to Riasi and from there to the existing railway systems."

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(h) *Precious and Semi-precious gemstones.*

According to Sir Thomas Holland's observation, Kashmir deserves to be called the home of the sapphire form of corundum. He writes : "Not only are there large deposits in India of the common form of this mineral, but the most highly prized specimens of its transparent red variety—the ruby—have been obtained from the famous mines of Burma, while the mines of Kashmir are noted for the size and transparency of the blue variety of sapphire". The discovery of this mineral substance was made in the year 1881. Then a few years afterwards the output of this precious substance failed and it was thought to be exhausted. Later, Mr. Middlemiss surveyed the supposedly exhausted area and found not only fresh pockets of sapphire there but also a ruby form of corundum, though in small quantities.

The sapphire mines were located in the village of Soomjam in the Padar district. The mines are found "at elevations between 14,800 and 14,950 feet". In the year 1927, an elaborate survey of the new areas and the experimental working of the mines were made by the mineral experts of the State and in this connection Mr. Middlemiss writes : ". . . . We are justified in coming to the conclusion that the so-called sapphire mines (as known before the Mineral Survey activities began) are not the only places where sapphire is present in the rocks of this area. We must regard the sapphire matrix as constituting, not only one or two isolated and therefore exhaustible pockets, but rather as being a continuous band of rock, shot, or impregnated here and there with lenticular patches of the gemstone. This entirely different conception of its habit to which we have been led implies a very much more extended distribution of the sapphire and its matrix than has hitherto been credited ; and bands of this nature among such folded metamorphic strata are apt to recur by reduplication. There may be more such still waiting to be brought to light."

Elsewhere in his report Mr. Middlemiss observes in

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regard to the sale of Sapphire: "In the first place we must have something to sell before we engage salesmen, and secondly, any stocks of sapphire thus accumulated would do no harm. Sapphire does not deteriorate with keeping, both it and all precious stones having always been regarded as a most portable and reliable source of actual wealth available as a world currency even when all other currencies have become depreciated. Also, some stocks we must always have in hand before sales begin." Besides sapphire and ruby which may be classed under precious stones, there occur some semi-precious stones which call for a mention here. They are : aquamarine (beryl), rubellite and green tourmaline, quartz felspar and serpentine.

(i) *Beryl and Aquamarine.*

This semi-precious gem was found to occur at Daso in Baltistan. During 1915-1917 an experimental work was done on it by Mr. Joti Prasad and Mr. Middlemiss. This gem has sprung into favour among lovers of art and beauty by virtue of its lustre and shine. This stone was also found to occur in other areas like the Sapphire Mines, Soomjam, Dangel sapphire area, near Kaban (a village on the Chandar Bhaga river) and near Chishote.

(j) *Rubellite and Green Tourmaline.*

Crystals of rubellite were found to occur in a place "7 miles from the Sapphire Mines". Similarly, green tourmaline was found to occur "in a granite vein 1 mile from the Sapphire Mines."

(k) *Quartz and Felspar.*

The crystals of quartz were reported to occur in the hills of Padar and Kishtwar and also in the "Basha and Braldu valleys, which valleys unite from the Shigar Valley."

(1) *Serpentine.*

It is reported to occur in two places "high up the Yaltsa Loomba, a tributary stream which joins the Baumaharel

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stream about 7 or 8 miles above Shigar". As the mines are at high altitudes, and hence covered with snow, they can be worked in August-September. Several articles are made out of Serpentine like tea-cups, tobacco pipes, dishes, etc. They are locally known as made of "Zahar mohura."

(m) *Other Minerals.*

Ochre deposits : The localities of Nur Khwah, Rata Sar and Jhuggi in the Jhelum Valley, Uri Tehsil, are well known for the occurrence of ochre deposits. In Nur Khwah, this mineral was first discovered in 1914 by a mining officer and subsequently in the other two places. Here this mineral represents several colours as enumerated in the report, such as yellow, orange, light red, venetian red, pinkish red and dark brown. Regarding the utility of ochres, Mr. Middlemiss writes in his report :

"In the descriptive portion that has gone before, it will be observed that I am assuming that ochre, or paint made from it is, or may be, a commodity in Kashmir and other neighbouring parts of India, not too far away : That there is, or may be, in fact a market for it Used either as oil paints over wood or as distemper over plaster or stucco it might rapidly gain in favour with a little "driers",

"For oil paints the only vehicle necessary with ochres is linseed oil and a small proportion of turpentine and "driers"."

Gangamopteris rock has been discovered by geologists as a great source of polishing material. It is located in Khunamuh near Srinagar. There are some hill-spurs as mentioned by Mr. Middlemiss in the report full with this rock which have been observed by Prof. D.N. Wadia near Pansapura and Marahama situated up the Jhelum river. Mr. Middlemiss describes the following uses to which this mineral can be profitably put :

(1) "As a metal polish, especially [of such metals as brass and copper. It is possible also that finer varieties of it obtained by electrocution may, when suitably treated, be made into a plate powder for silver and gold articles.

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(2) For polishing certain stones, especially marbles, serpentine and cement floors.

(3) As a window-glass cleaner.

(4) As a razor paste for strops when mixed with some fatty substances.

..... It will be seen that the substance only requires little enterprise and a small outlay of capital to enable it to take the place of the imported articles such as "Globe Metal Polish", "Monkey Brand Soap", "Brasso", etc."

The limestone composites of the Jammu Province are replete with China clay, Panthal clay, etc.

In the Mining Magazine of August 1950, an English mineralogist discussed the potential of the minerals of Jammu and Kashmir. He confirmed the reports of Middlemiss and others and in his summing up he speaks of the possibilities and the difficulties as follows :

"..... A point of frequent notice has been the lack of satisfactory communications in Kashmir. The boundary between India and Pakistan runs from the Ravi River, in Gurdaspur, to the border of Kashmir, near Kathua, about 48 miles south-east of Jammu. There is only one railway into Kashmir—the line from Sialkot to Jammu—that is, from Pakistan. Kathua (in Jammu) is, however, barely 8 miles from Pathankot (in India), but the Ravi separates these two places. Similarly, the chief motorable roads to Srinagar were from Jammu via Udhampur and the Banihal Pass on the eastern side and from Rawalpindi via Murree and the Jhelum Valley on the western side. There was a route from Jammu via Akhnur and Pauni and Budil almost due north to Srinagar and another from Gujrat railway station via Bhimber to join the Budil route ; also yet another route from Jhelum via Poonch to join the Jhelum Valley motor road between Muzzaffarabad and Baramula. Thus, all these road connections were from the Pakistan side and there was no main road from Chamba or Gurdaspur (from the Indian side); this may have been modified since 1947. All routes in Kashmir, beyond Srinagar to Gilgit or Baltistan and so to Kashgar or to Ladakh for Leh and Khotan or eastward into the trans-Himalaya Hundes of Tibet are tracks for pack animals only.

"There is no question that the Chenab Valley around Riasi is a potential industrial region for it is there that the bauxite,

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coal, limestone, iron ore and other mineral occurrences are best developed. The gypsum of the Uri Tehsil, lying west of Srinagar, more than half way to Muzaffarabad, is another problem. If 20 years ago, when the recommendations were made by Middlemiss, it was considered unjustifiable to build a railway of less than 45 miles between Jammu and Riasi there is less industrial justification now. At that time it might have cost £10,000 a mile (say £500,000 sterling for a hill railway of 45 miles); to-day the cost will not be less than £25,000 a mile—say, £1,500,000 sterling for the 45 miles—nor do we know very much more about the quality and quantity of the mineral occurrences than Middlemiss knew in 1930. There were many problems at that time: The variable character of the coal; the belief that the bauxite was unsuitable for the Bayer process, and the lack of interest by private enterprise. Notwithstanding these serious details and the fact that practically no full investigation of any of the other ores—copper, lead, zinc, etc.—has been made it has been rumoured that Kashmir is abundantly endowed with mineral of economic importance.

“There is no question that much can be done in a modest way but whatever is done will require considerable State encouragement. The harnessing of great rivers at suitable falls and gorges is an obvious consideration and such a scheme has been proposed for the Chenab River at Dhian Garh a few miles north of Riasi. This re-opens the subject of a railway extension from Jammu to Riasi (and perhaps its electrification from electricity supplied from hydro-electric station at Dhian Garh) involving an expenditure of between £1,500,000 and £2,000,000. What kind of freight might be secured to pay interest on this capital outlay? The freighting of raw bauxite or coal or limestone would appear to be one solution, but it is doubtful if any considerable quantities of bauxite or limestone would be in demand at or beyond Jammu. The true solution would be to prepare the finished products in the Riasi area, thus creating an industrial centre there, and export whatever might be the most suitable manufactured materials.

“This, then, is the problem. On the evidence available there is not likely to be any great deposit of a highpriced natural substance in Kashmir. (There is no report on the finding of uranium ore so far). If it was worth trying to export stibnite (antimony ore) from Lahaul it would be easier to have mined copper or lead or zinc ore if these metalliferous minerals were present in rich deposits. The final opinion would seem to be that

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Kashmir is not richly endowed but that there are certain mineral occurrences—bauxite, coal, gypsum, ochres, and perhaps chromite and iron ore—which provide raw material for modest but valuable domestic industries.”

Perhaps thinking in terms of the vast industrial output of the West the writer is correct in his careful approach to Jammu and Kashmir's industrial potential. But these “modest but valuable industries” would make a vast difference to the life of the average man and woman of the State. The mountain regions of Kashmir proper have not yet been fully explored from the industrial angle. One day this hidden wealth will be brought from the earth. The New Kashmir is only five years old and the men who will industrialise their country are still at school. Great opportunities await them.

SAFFRON

THE vast plateaux of Pampur (ancient Padampur) present a sight never to be forgotten in the months of October and November when the famous saffron fields are in flower and the immense sheets of mauve blossom with the red and orange stigma form a carpet of exquisite beauty which makes a lasting impression on the mind. The effect is doubly enhanced during the clear and bright moonlight of *Kartika* when Kashmiris in their thousands throng the fields and take a parting leave of the spring, summer and autumn scenes which they had enjoyed in this "Paradise on Earth". The petals are so delicate that the transmitted moonlight imparts a peculiar brilliancy to the colour. But the Persian poet reminds them—*zaffran-i-dida bayad, rahi Hindustan girift*—after seeing the saffron blossom the visitor should take the road to India, meaning that the winter was near and it would not be congenial to the foreign visitor.

Kalidasa extolls the beauty of the saffron fields in many of his immortal works. It is said that the Greek soldiers of Alexander during their visit to the Valley were lost in admiration at the sight of such extensive beds of beautifully and delicately tinted purple flowers. Abul Fazl in his *Ain-i-Akbari* says that the "saffron fields in blossom afford a prospect that would enchant those who were most difficult to please". In short from the earliest to the present times the saffron fields of Pampur have attracted people from far and near.

Saffron (*crocus sativus*) is famous for its bouquet. That it has always been a royal flower and received the honour that is due to it, is proved by the fact that from times immemorial it has formed a part of the paraphernalia of worship of the highest among the Hindus, the Greeks, the Romans

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and other ancient peoples. In ancient Ireland the King's mantle was dyed with saffron and even down to the 17th century the "loin-croich" or saffron-dyed shirt, was worn by persons of rank in the Hebrides. From *kumkum* is derived the word *kunku* used for the mark on the forehead by the women of the Deccan. Hindus regard it as an article of good omen and every important function is preceded by sprinkling it on the way as well as using it as *tilak* on the forehead. Mahatma Gandhi when he started on the historic Dandi March had to put on the *kumkum tilak*. From ancient times it has been the monopoly of Kashmir and thus it is also known as *Kashmiraja*. In early Greek times it was a royal colour and from Kalhana's work we learn that in Kashmir, the native land of saffron, it was the privilege of royalty to use it as a scented salve or emollient. As a perfume it was strewn in Greek halls, courts and theatres and in the Roman baths. The streets of Rome, we are told, were sprinkled with saffron when Nero made his entry into the city. Saffron was used as an ingredient in Greek medicine and cuisine and it continues to be so used in Kashmir. It is still mixed with rice by the Kashmiris, the Persians, and the people of Spain where the Arab conquerors first introduced its cultivation in 961 A.D. It is interesting to note that saffron was cultivated in England until the 18th century in a valley about 44 miles from London where the little town of Walden whose characteristic industry was the culture of saffron is still known as Saffron Walden. According to Hakluyt saffron was brought to England by a pilgrim from Tripoli, who hid a stolen corm in the hollow of his staff.

The legend of its origin as recorded in the *Rajatarangini* says that this flower was first given as a gift by *Takhshaka Naga* to a physician, Waghbhatta, who lived at Pampur. The *Naga* fell sick of an eye complaint and went to the physician who tried in vain to cure him. Baffled, the physician at last asked the *Naga* whether he was a man, and on finding that he was *Naga*, he at once saw that the remedies applied to his eyes were nullified by the poisonous vapour

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which issued from his mouth. He bound his eyes with a cloth and the *Naga* was restored to health. In his gratitude the *Naga* gave the physician a bulb of saffron and the cultivation sprang up at Pampur. The *Takshaka Naga* is worshipped to this day in the large pool of limped water situated close to the village of Zewan. In the *Ain-i-Akbari*, Abul Fazl mentions a pilgrimage to the spring at the commencement of the saffron cultivation.

So close and connected have saffron and Kashmir become through the ages that Professor Lachmi Dhar Kalla adduces it as one of the proofs for his theory that the birthplace of Kalidasa was Kashmir. Kalidasa in his works describes minutely its cultivation and the use to which it is put which only a native of Kashmir could know, saffron being the monopoly of Kashmir.

The cultivation of saffron is an art in itself. For seed purposes a particular aspect and sloping ground is required, and it takes three years before the bulb can be planted in the small square plots where the saffron is to be grown. The plots must remain fallow for eight years and no manure can be given to them and no assistance given in the way of water. When once the bulb has been placed in the square, it will live on for fourteen years without any help from the cultivator, new bulbs being produced and the old ones rotting away. The time for planting out the bulbs is in July and August and all that the cultivator has to do is to break up the surface gently a few times and to ensure proper drainage of the plot by digging a neat trench on all four sides. The flowers appear about the middle of October, and the purple blooms and the delicious, though somewhat overpowering, scent of the saffron turns the dry uninviting plateaux of Pampur into a rare and wonderful garden. When the flowers are collected the real work of extracting saffron commences. The flowers are dried in the sun and three long stigmata are picked out by hand. The stigma has a red orange tip which forms the *shahi zaffran*, the first quality saffron. The long white base of the stigma also makes

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saffron but it is of inferior quality to the tips. The saffron thus collected in a dry condition is known to the trade as *mongra*. When the *mongra* saffron has been extracted the sun-dried flowers are beaten lightly with sticks and winnowed. Then the whole mass is thrown into water when the petals swim and the essential parts of the flower sink. The parts which have sunk (*niwal*) are collected and the parts which have risen to the top are again dried and beaten and the process repeated. After each repetition the quality becomes inferior. The saffron so collected is named *lachha*. There are further processes of adulteration and it requires a trained and experienced eye and taste to find out the amount of adulteration in a given quantity of saffron.

The saffron cultivation and trade has seen many vicissitudes in Kashmir. In the ancient Hindu period, it formed the monopoly of Kashmir and this precious flower yielded a large revenue to the State besides being a means of livelihood to a great number of people. Its cultivation having fallen to a low level during the intervening period of lawlessness and trouble, it again rose to its former glory under the Moghuls who used it in medicine and condiments. Abul Fazl mentions that from 10,000 to 12,000 bighas of land were under saffron cultivation. Later on during the dark period of Afghan rule the cultivation fell until it was again revived during the time of Maharaja Ranbirsingh who had to import the seed from Kishtwar, the people having eaten the bulbs in their distress during the many famines which visited the Valley. But during the first land settlement only 132 acres were under cultivation. With the rise in prices and the demand from India, the saffron trade has become an important one and the exports are increasing every year. It is hoped that more land will be brought under cultivation and the old and obsolete system of farming out the State revenue to contractors will give place to a better and modern system in the light of the present land policy of the Government, which will at once increase the production of this valuable commodity and put the industry on a more scientific basis.

LADAKH

LADAKH is a mountainous country situated in the eastern part of the Kashmir Valley. "It is for the most part a desert of bare crags and granite dust, with vast arid tablelands of high elevation, a land where there are no forests or pastures". There is hardly any place in this region which is less than 8,000 feet high. The height of its mountain peaks ranges from 17,000 to 25,000 feet. A large part of the population of Ladakh lives at an elevation varying between 12,000 and 15,000 feet above sea-level, making the areas inhabited by them some of the loftiest inhabited districts in the world. The total area of the province exceeds 30,000 sq. miles.

The country contains "a great portion of what is the biggest massif of mountains in the world—the Karakorams". They form the northern boundary of Ladakh, with passes lying at elevations of 17,000 to 18,000 feet. To the south of the Karakorams lies the Ladakh range, the peaks of which tower only some 3,500 feet above the summit of Mont Blanc. South of this range and cut off from its main chain by the river Indus lies the Zaskar range. Thus, surveying the country from south to north, three mountain chains are seen and they contain two great valleys, the Indus and the Shyok, the true floor of Ladakh.

Major M.L.A. Gompertz writes in his book, "Magic Ladakh", that "at some comparatively recent period of the earth's history Ladakh was under the sea. Later on, when it emerged, it was covered with an ice-cap sweeping right down from the north Polar regions. That ice-cap has been melting more or less continuously ever since". At many places in this country the actual remains of the ice-cap can still be found. According to the same authority, the perpetually ice-covered slopes in the Karakorams are the "remains of the

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original ice-cap which once formed an almost unbroken sheet from the Pole down to at least as far as Kashmir, which is approximately at the latitude of southern Spain." The melting ice serves the useful purpose of providing irrigation water in the country.

Ladakh is a country of extremes of weather—intense heat by day and piercing cold at night. The climate is extremely dry, with no rainfalls and only a little snow. The fertile valleys lie along the waters of the Indus, the Sutlej and the Chenab and they are covered with luxuriant crops. Barley, wheat, buck-wheat, peas, rapeseed, beans, turnips and lucerne are the chief crops grown. *Grim* (a variety of loose-grained barley) is intensively cultivated. This crop flourishes in regions reaching an altitude of 14,000 feet. In warmer districts apples and apricots are grown. The land is particularly well-known as the home of the markhor and the ibex. Snow leopards, the marmot, the red bear, antelopes, etc., are also found here.

For centuries Ladakh has been an important centre of trade between India and the countries of Central Asia, Leh, its capital, being the terminus for the caravans from both the regions. The principal commodity of trade is wool, which furnishes raw material for the world renowned shawl manufacture of Kashmir. Other exports are salt and dry fruits and the imports tea, tobacco, grains, sugar and matches.

A hazy picture of ancient Ladakh emerges from the travel accounts of the Chinese pilgrims, Fa-Hien and Ou'Kong who travelled through Ladakh in the year 400 A.D. and spent more than a month in the country. They refer to the people "as the men of the snowy mountains." Fa-Hien wrote that the country was "mountainous, and so cold that no grain, but corn, ever ripened". He found Buddhism flourishing as the only religion and saw in it nothing that was very different from the Buddhism of India, except for the fact that the Ladakhi Buddhists used, as they continue to do up to the present day, the prayer-wheel. This is the familiar revolving

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cylinder which also appears as an emblem on the tombs of the ancient Scythian princes.

The people of Ladakh are a mixture of the Mongolian and the Aryan races. Aryans who originally settled in the country were the early Buddhist people from Kashmir and the Dards of Gilgit. The Mongolian stock is traced to Tibet, from which country shepherds and nomads came to the plains of Ladakh to graze their flocks. The Mars, who started settling from the year 200 B.C., contributed largely to the development of the country's ancient irrigation system. They built waterways and also erected many fine pieces of sculpture. They were the first people to introduce the art of music in the country and evolved a musical instrument which closely resembles the Indian Sitar. They were followed by the Dards who subdued them and also conquered the earlier Tibetan settlers. To the Dards belonged the wonderful art of rock-carving. They drew figures of the various animals inhabiting the country, but many of these beautiful works of art have been lost. Last to settle in the country were the Mongols. The fusion of these races has produced the modern Ladakhi. The Dards introduced the game of polo which even today is a very popular sport. Those settlers who were originally Mars, adopted music as a profession.

The typical Ladakhi is comparatively small in stature, though there are exceptions to the general type. The men average five feet four inches in height. The women are decidedly shorter and of a sturdy build. The features of all are Mongolian, with high cheek-bones, slanting eyes and very little hair on the face. The people call themselves DUKPAS and speak a Tibetan language belonging to the Mongolian family. According to some authorities, the alphabet of this language was imported from India. It was brought through Kashmir and its script is a form of Devnagari which was in vogue in Kashmir in the seventh century A.D. The people of Ladakh call their alphabet the Ka-ga, a term equivalent to "A, B, C" in the English language. Ka and Ga are the first letters of the Ladakhi language.

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The inhabitants of Ladakh live mostly by agriculture, cultivating tiny holdings of land. They lead modest, austere and peaceful lives. Their food consists of thick barley cakes moistened with water and accompanied by a broth of dried or fresh turnips. On festive occasions, such as marriage, meat, which is normally beyond the means of an average person, is added to the menu. Tea is a common and widely-used beverage and its method of preparation is entirely indigenous. The tea leaves are mixed with soda bicarb and seasoned with salt. The brewed tea is then churned with butter till the whole becomes a thick liquid. Liquors made of fermented barley and wheat are in common use. They have a sour odour.

The dress of the Ladakhi consists of a woollen cloak which is thick and warm. Quilted skull-caps, or a cap of sheep-skin made with a large flap to cover the neck and ears, are worn. Boots of felt, with the soles of sheep or goatskin, are used. The Ladakhi woman's dress is a black woollen jacket over a coloured woollen petticoat. A sheep-skin covers the top of the body hanging over both front and back. A large brass or iron needle holds the vestment in place in front.

As in Tibet, polyandry has been practised in Ladakh from the remotest times. The institution is confined to the brothers in a family, the eldest marrying a wife whose other husbands are also his brothers. The usual number of such husbands is two, but three or four are also married to the same wife. Where there are many brothers in a family, the younger brothers are precluded from sharing the common partnership. Should they continue unmarried, they enter the monasteries to live as Lamas. The family estate is inherited by the eldest brother, whose duty it is to look after his mother and unmarried sisters. He also has to support the next two younger brothers who are married to the same wife. In the absence of a male heir the family wealth is inherited by a daughter who can marry the person of her own choice and also divorce him at will. Such a daughter for preference

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marries a younger son in another family who is barred from marriage to his elder brother's wife. This husband is known as her "Magpa" and his position is not a very pleasant one. He owns nothing, always does what he is told and he can be divorced summarily. After the divorce of one "Magpa", the wife exercising this right may take another husband whose eventual fate can also be the same.

In their morals the people of Ladakh have remained untouched by the sophisticated outlook and vice prevalent in other lands. Murder is unknown in Ladakh and infanticide unheard of. There is no room for jealousy in Ladakhi society and the 'property sense' does not appear to exist in any shape or form.

Buddhism, in a slightly varied form, constitutes the religion of Ladakh. The people profess a faith that teaches "compassion, courtesy and kindliness, truthfulness, loyalty, politeness in word, cheerfulness and good humour". The form of Buddhism prevalent in Ladakh is known as Lamaism, and religious sentiment is an all-pervading factor in the life of the people. Buddhism found a foothold in Ladakh and was accepted universally during the reign of Asoka. The Indian Emperor sent emissaries and monks to spread the teachings of Lord Buddha and thus, in the middle of the seventh century, Buddhism even found its way into Tibet through the country of Ladakh. The basic postulates of the Buddhist faith as it exists in Ladakh and the principles of Tibetan Lamaism are nearly the same, the people professing spiritual allegiance to Lhasa, the capital of Tibet.

There are in Ladakh over 30,000 Buddhists. Monks and nuns dominate the social order. The monks are known as Lamas and a Lama is made, not born. The candidate generally enters monkhood as a child, sometimes even as a baby, although persons can also become Lamas later on in life. So high is the number of Lamas in Ladakh, that the country is in fact often referred to as the "Land of the Lamas". The manifold functions of a Lama are described

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by Major Gompertz in his book, "Magic Ladakh" as follows :

"He learns to read and write He learns to patter charms and to intone the Buddhist scriptures—the Tengyur and Kangyr—one of one hundred and eight large volumes, the other of, so far as I remember, sixty three tomes.

"He learns the ritual of the services He learns also to play [the religious instruments—the big warming pan-shaped drums, the little clarionets, the great telescopic brass and copper trumpets, six or seven or eight feet long. He learns also to spin the "dorjes", the thunderbolt symbols of Lamaism—which are the main mark of the Lama ; learns also to play the little double-sided drums, which are turned in the hand and so beaten by a small weight on a string as they twist backwards and forwards—little double drums, of which the best are made from the brainpans of two human skulls, and like the "dorjes" are mighty weapons against demons.

"He is taught also how to make the ceremonial offerings of *chang* (a Ladakhi liquor) and barley, to build the pyramids of butter and parched grain which are piled up on festival days, learns too the charms against evil spirits which will form so much of his work later on when he goes out among the laity.

"And you meet him sometimes in company with an old lama—going out to celebrate a marriage or a funeral—bearing the little brass shrined images or the tomes of the scriptures, acting in fact as acolyte, and so learning the practical side of the business.

"Then, for such as show aptitude, there are arts and crafts to be learned—the printing of the scriptures by the use of wooden and metal blocks, the fashioning of images in metal or wood or plaster, the painting of the wall frescoes, without which no monastery would be complete.

"Again, there are horoscopes to be learned, the manner of selecting auspicious day for weddings, the selection of names for children, the choice of methods of disposing of the dead—an important business upon which may depend the hereafter of the departed spirit."

All Lamas do not necessarily live in monasteries. Some of them live in the villages and take part in the tilling of fields and other work connected with the daily life of the

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monastery. Nearly every family in Ladakh has at least one representative in the monastery. When a boy is eight years old, he is sent to the monastery for education and training as a monk. He passes through the stages of pupil and probationer and ultimately becomes a monk. As monk he observes some 253 vows, including that of celibacy, and also conforms to a rigorous discipline. In every home in Ladakh one sees a boy wearing a Lama's cap or a little girl with the cap of a *chomo* nun.

A Lama's head is shaved completely. Some Lamas wear red caps, others yellow ones. Those wearing red caps belong to the old, unreformed sect, while those with yellow caps are members of the "Gelugp"—the reformed lamaist church. The head Lama in Ladakh is known as the "Shushok". He is born, not made, and one of the basic tenets of lamaism says that a "Shushok" after his death is reborn only as a "Shushok" because he has attained *nirvana* and enjoys freedom from the cycle of life. In the words of Major Gompertz :

"His spirit is that of Buddha, of a personified attribute of Buddha, or of some famous bodhisat.

"When, therefore, a Shushok dies those about him listen earnestly in the hope that he may give them some clue as to where his spirit will re-incarnate, which he may or may not do.

"Thereafter they wait for a time, which must not be less than a matter of ten months but which may be considerably longer and may run to several years and then they set out to seek for the babe or child whose human form conceals the immortal spirit of the living Buddha. They may have some clue to guide them as to the locality, some clue caught from the dying words in his last incarnation—or they may be dependent solely upon the auguries of their sacred books.

"Eventually they will gather together several children whose birth has occurred later than the minimum period necessary since the Shushok last changed his body—interesting, this, since it implies a belief that the soul enters the embryo body from the moment of conception.

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"The children are then shown possessions of the late Shushok—his robes, his insignia, his *dorje* and drums, and so on—and when one or other of the children evinces recognition of some or all of these, possibility is converted into actuality.

"The mother retains the child for such time as may be necessary for its upbringing, after which perhaps at the age of four or five, or six—the little Shushok is taken to his monastery and placed in the care of a selected tutor, whose work is to instruct him in such of the business."

A monastery in Ladakh is known as "Gompa." It is generally built in a solitary place and is always the biggest and the best building in the area. Hundreds of Lamas live in a monastery and every village, however small it may be, has its own monastery presided over by one or several Lamas. All the monasteries look beautiful and impressive. Their walls are built of stone masonry and they are constructed on steep cliffs. At the entrance of every Gompa are prayer-cylinders. Inside the building are two large rooms, the first containing the monastery's library of sacred books and Buddhist texts. In the second room, known as "Lha Kang" or God's House, are to be found the images of the deities worshipped in the monastery.

Nunneries are established in the neighbourhood of the monasteries and, like the Lamas, the nuns also belong to either the red or the yellow sect. Nuns belonging to the yellow sect are more respected than their counterparts professing the tenets of the red sect, though both nuns and monks belonging to the latter sect are to be seen in far greater numbers. One of the notable features associated with the monasteries is the famous mystery play performed with the advent of spring. Such plays are often specially arranged for distinguished visitors at the Hemis Gompa, the largest monastery in Ladakh inhabited by monks belonging to the red-capped order. The play is staged at the time of the annual fair. The environs of the monastery wear a festive appearance at this time and to the monastery throng people from all corners of Ladakh. There is no fixed date for the

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holding of the annual fair, the time being dependent upon a particular occurrence of the full moon of the Tibetan calendar, which may take place at the end of a series of cycles, sometimes totalling 60 years. The actors in the mystery plays are all Lamas and the musicians of the orchestra are also Lamas, who blow trumpets which are nearly 15 feet long, strike huge cymbals and drums and also play clarionets. The play is staged in the courtyard of the monastery.

The first act, or rather its first dance known as the "Dance of Purification", commences after the Shushok has seated himself on his throne. The dancers wear black hats and each carries a twig from the holy "Shukpa" tree. As they dance the lamas sweep the ground with these and sprinkle holy water from vessels which they carry. Their number is then reinforced by a contingent of dancers resembling half-human and demoniacal figures. The dance progresses clock-wise round the courtyard. It is performed with a very slow motion. When it ends, the dancers depart in pairs. There then enters a figure who is the Lord Buddha. He is accompanied by nine others who symbolise his earthly lives. They are dressed gorgeously and their actions are of a ceremonial character. After circling the courtyard, they take their seats under the gallery to the right of the orchestra with the Buddha in the centre. The smaller masked figures, dressed in silk robes, come out and pay their homage. They represent celestial spirits.

This interlude is followed by another dance. Strange-looking figures depicting demons of all ages swarm out upon the stage and commence dancing in a slow stately measure. They retire and are replaced by another group wearing masks decked with three-cornered flags. Each of the dancers carries a drum and they face one another in two lines, advancing and retreating to the beaten accompaniment of their drums. The beats become very rapid and then are slowed down. The culmination is a sudden shriek from all the demon actors and their flight from the centre of the

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stage. Then enter spirits clad in rags. Then demons seek to frighten them. They dance in a confusion of movements, dashing in various directions. They also leap forwards and backwards. More figures now appear on the stage. They are the stag-headed god of hell and his attendants. They wear dog-toothed masks symbolising the fate which awaits those who lead unworthy lives. They dance slowly in a circle.

At this point two figures clad in red robes make their appearance on the roof of the monastery and play notes upon their conch shells. It is a signal for the audience to leave the amphitheatre for their mid-day meal.

At its conclusion the red-clad conch-blowers appear again on the roof and blow blasts summoning the audience back to their places in the courtyard. The dances then begin again. From year to year the character and order of the dances vary. In one of the dances, men wearing the old Mongol warrior dress and brandishing swords appear. Next come two Lamas carrying the foot-long figure of a man under a scarf. This is lifted to reveal to the audience an effigy of Langdhama who was the king of Tibet in the early Buddhist days and was strongly anti-Buddhist. The actors in black hats enter again and dance around the effigy of the dead king. They make offerings of *chang* and barley meal to him. The further course of this mystic dance is thus described by Major Gompertz :

“As they withdraw, the demons sweep down and the ghouls enter also—white, pallid figures, with skull-shaped masks, and long figures and toes to their white garments to give them a skeleton appearance ; tight-fitting white garments, picked out in red to represent the bones.

“They dance fantastically round the corpse, dashing up to it and threatening it with their ghost daggers, dashing away with wild shrieks, sweeping in again, and once more dashing out. Sometimes they are chased away by some saintly figure who performs charms and incantations, but presently they are back again, waving their daggers.

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"Then comes the great stag-headed, blue-faced skull-crowned god of hell with his sword, and stands over the corpse. He waves his sword about it as though to carve it in pieces, yet somehow missing it each time, and perhaps he, in turn, is repelled for a space by the intervention of some benevolent figure.

"But the end is certain. At last he will suddenly swoop down on the corpse and bury his sword in it, the ghouls will clamour round and carve it into little pieces, which they stuff into their cavernous, skeleton jaws. And here, for some strange reason, a lama stands beside the corpse. Whether the idea is to show that the lama is powerless to save the evil-doer who has neglected him during his earthly life, I cannot say, but that is the impression it gives.

"Thereafter, from the tragic the scene turns to the grotesque. Enters an old teacher—a fat buffoon of a mask—who can barely walk, attended by a riotous train of impish schoolboys in pink masks. He installs himself on a seat, and proceeds to teach his flock, who mock him the whole time, and his ill-directed blows with the rod he holds fail always to reach the delinquents. I was told this figure represented the false teachers who, from time to time, have arisen in the history of Buddhism. The horse-play goes on for a long time, and draws shrieks of laughter from the crowds, most of all when one daring youth possesses himself of the rod and castigates his pantaloons of a master."

In the afternoon the ceremony of animals takes place. Yaks, ponies and dogs are brought into the courtyard. They are first censed and then sprinkled with holy water. After this they are painted red. They are then led three times through the monastery building. These animals are believed to carry away with them the sins committed by people during the year which has passed. The ceremony brings the show to an end, and in the evening the whole gathering indulges in festivities of all sorts. This is the end of the mystery play which will not be staged again for another year.

The meaning of the mystic plays has been well described by the British traveller, E. F. Knight, in his book, "Where Three Empires Meet". He writes :

"But the Devil Dance, which is the most important feature in the function, has at least one definite object. It seems that after a man has died, his soul, on its way to its next

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sphere, is waylaid by demons with horrible faces and forms, who endeavour to terrify the soul out of its proper road. Should the demons succeed in this, that belated soul will wander about in space for an indefinite period, in vain seeking its proper sphere. In order to lessen the risk of such mischance, the lamas during this festive occasion put on masks resembling the faces of these demons, and imitate their awful antics ; in this way, the spectators are familiarised with these sights and sounds of horror, and when they die their souls will not be so readily dismayed by the apparitions."

The people of Ladakh evince an absorbing interest in songs, music and dance. Music and songs form part of every festival and accompany the gathering of the harvests. Their dances are symbolical and interpretative in character. They spring from the spontaneous outbursts of the people and are not hampered by the restrictions of convention or any cut-and-dried rules. Music, song and dance are also indispensable on marriages among the peasants.

SOME ASPECTS OF KASHMIRI POETRY*

THOUGH through the centuries, Kashmiri has been the mother-tongue of more than half the four million population of Jammu and Kashmir, it has never enjoyed the position of being a literary medium or the official language in the country of its birth. It has all along remained a vernacular—the medium of intercourse among the common people, while Sanskrit, Prakrit, Persian and English have in turn been the court language or the language of the educated classes. Till the end of the 18th century, almost no educated man would consider it quite respectable to write in the language of the masses, with the result that whatever poetry was produced till then was mainly the work of wandering, possibly unlettered, village bards and of women like Habba Khatoon and Arin Mal. It is only very recently that the members of the learned gentry have taken to writing poetry in the mother tongue.

Lack of authentic texts presents another problem to the student of Kashmiri poetry. Many of the poems of the past ages have come down to us through oral tradition. Where manuscripts exist, it is not always possible to be certain that the poems are correctly attributed to a particular author; this becomes all the more difficult where somewhat varied texts in different manuscripts of the same work are available. Lack of an established and universally recognised script has presented quite a baffling problem. Kashmiri texts have at different times been recorded in Sharda, Persian, Devnagri and Roman scripts. It is only in 1949 that the Kashmir Government evolved an official script; this is not yet very

*For the convenience of the readers not knowing Kashmiri, quotations are given in free English rendering of the original.

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widely known, and the number of printed books available in this script is very limited. In spite of the limitations imposed by these factors, however, it may be quite feasible to make a brief survey of the various striking features of Kashmiri poetry.

Like all literary traditions in the world, the first poetic productions in Kashmiri must have been the work of illiterate persons who expressed the impulses and urges of their times in song and story before ever any such thing was recorded in writing. It was just folk-lore. Kashmiri is very rich in this traditional type of poetry, and it is here that we may look for the seeds of those special characteristics of Kashmiri narrative and lyrical poetry which matured and flowered and culminated in full fruition in later ages. The oldest songs of this type are those sung and recited by Hindu and Muslim women on the occasion of marriage festivities. These are called *Vanavun* or Marriage Songs. Such songs are not even now recorded in books and have come down to us orally through the centuries. While there are similar songs known to many peoples of the East, it may be noted with interest that the English have no such folk-lore. Then the old folk ballads of Kashmir, still enshrined in the memories and hearts of the children of its soil—the unsophisticated village folk—are generally set in a sombre key. These tend to revolve round “old, unhappy, far-off things” in preference to “battles long ago” or “moving incidents by flood and field”. The melancholy moods of these nameless bards have, in fact, left their impress on the narrative poems of later poets, and their impulses have found reincarnation in the wistful tunes of our contemporary poets.

Similarly, it is the old anonymous folk songs of Kashmir that have created for the ages the traditions of our lyrical poetry. Apart from the songs of the seasons and harvest songs, there are two distinctly marked strains in this kind of poetry; the religious or devotional, and the purely romantic. The former have given us an almost unbroken tradition of a certain distinctive type of devotional-cum-mystical-cum-

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metaphysical poetry, while in the dance tunes of our ancient romantic songs we have the foundation of a peculiar type of love poetry—a unique product of the genius of our people, best conveyed by two Kashmiri words of infinitely rich meaning and association, *rov* and *lol*. *Rov* is a peculiar type of rhythmic dance in which a number of women, with their arms interlocked and forming a crescent-shaped single line, join together and sing a song in chorus, keeping time with the movements of their legs and feet as they move backwards and forwards. Men do not join this dance and can only watch as spectators from a distance. It appears that in the dance styles commonly known over the world men and women generally join together in folk group-dances. Such is the practice even among many of the hill tribes dwelling in other parts of the Himalayas. It is rather a mystifying phenomenon that Kashmiri folk dances alone should provide an exception to this general practice, even though among the common folk in Kashmir the sexes have never been segregated within air-tight compartments. Again, *lol* is a Kashmiri word, recurring again and again in our lyrical poetry, rich in association and tradition, and almost impossible to render into another language. It implies love, wistful longing, a tugging at the heart, a nostalgia for objects far and dear, for experiences known and unknown. With this background it may be easy to realize that the main characteristics of our lyrical and romantic poetry are rooted firmly in our innumerable native songs whose origin and time of composition it is now impossible to locate.

Leaving aside tradition and folk lore, it is really by the middle of the 14th century that we can historically locate the first poets of Kashmir. The most distinguished of these is Lalla, the mystic woman saint whose sayings and songs still constitute a rich cultural treasure of the common folk in the town and the country. From all accounts come down to us, Lalla was a simple village woman—possibly illiterate—on whom the light of truth dawned through some intuitive experience. It is very difficult to say whether she had any

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sizeable or presentable poetic traditions to fall back upon, but there is no doubt that her profound mystic vision gave to her a language, a tongue, and an utterance that, for its beauty and crispness of expression and for its depth of thought, easily places her work among the highest achievements of its kind. And when we note further that her illustrations, imagery, and symbolisms are of a piece with what we find in the highest mystic and metaphysical poetry in other languages of mankind, the experience leaves us almost breathless with wonder and amazement. Lalla is not only the first known but easily the greatest of our poets.

Lalla's poetry, it may be observed, firmly established in our tongue the position of a characteristic type of religious lyric known in Kashmiri as *Lila* and *Vak*. Her next successor in this domain was Sheikh Noor-ud-Din, alias Nund Rishi. As in Lalla's poetry, the moods and passions of the lover in the songs of Noor-ud-Din are just symbolic ways of expressing the eternal longing of the soul yearning for the Supreme Being. Strangely enough, as mystics and saints and poets, both Lalla and Noor-ud-Din, even to this day, have an equal claim on the affections of both Hindus and Muslims; in fact, both communities hold forth contested views as to the community to which either originally belonged. This, by the way, throws some revealing side-light on the Kashmiri people's cultural traditions established in the course of centuries.

Lalla and Noor-ud-Din are believed to have been contemporaries. In later times the devotional type of poetry, of which firm foundations were laid by these two great ones, found remarkable exponents in, among others, Parmanand and Mirza Kak. Parmanand was a village *Patwari* and lived in the village of Mattan. He is the greatest exponent of the *lila* in which he gives expression to his devotion or *bhakti* for Lord Krishna in symbolic as well as direct terms. His verses have an unrivalled sweetness and a simplicity and directness of diction and expression which seem more often to hide rather than reveal their deep metaphysical import. Mirza-

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Kak was a ploughman saint who passed his earthly days in Hangalgund, his adopted village, in a secluded corner of the vale of Brang amidst surroundings of uniquely quiet and sublime scenic grandeur. His verses followed the *vak* and not the *lila* pattern. In these there is less of devotional sentiment towards a personal god ; the poet is more pre-occupied with the mysteries of birth and death and the question marks provided by the existence of sin and sorrow and conflict in life and his profound thoughts on these eternal problems find expression in dignified language of austere beauty.

From the worlds of vision revealed to the privileged eyes of the mystics and the saints, we may turn to the world of common men and women, to their joys and loves and tears and laughter ; from God to love and life and nature. Among the first distinguished secular poets known to the literary history of Kashmir are Arin Mal and Habba Khatoon. The former was the wife of a Brahman of great learning and culture. Her love lyrics have a delicacy, a depth of feeling and thought, and reveal a certain attention to nature's beauties. One illustration would suffice :

I was a full blown Jasmine ; pining
For Love I turned as pale as the *Arni* rose ;
When will my Love come to me ?
Let us arise while it is early dawn,
And seek my Love
Over hills and mountain-barriers ;
I wait expectantly for him,
When will he come to me ?

But the greatest name in this line is certainly that of Habba Khatoon, the queen of Yusuf Shah Chak. Habba is really the most popular poet of Kashmir ; hers is, indeed, a name to conjure with ; and her songs have been treasured in the memories of all Kashmiris and are even today on the lips of the high and the low, the learned and the rustic. The Kashmir Government in recognition of her fame and her undying glory, organised public celebrations which lasted several days in the autumn of 1951. It was a fitting tribute

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to the best loved songstress of the Kashmiri language. The secret of her popularity is not far to seek. She was a village girl whose beauty and genius led her to the closest proximity to the throne, but soon after, the tragic events of her time threw her back into the lap of sorrow and penury. She is really the poetess of the people. Her words and images are of the sweetest and homeliest kind. Her experiences and longings are of the earth. Thus the enthraling music of her songs has its appeal not only for the elect, but also for the common folk, the boatman on the Dal Lake, the fisherman over the Wular, peasant toiling in the paddy and the saffron fields and the shepherd tending his flocks below the snow-line of the majestic hill. There is a spell in her magic words that still thrills the hearts of the young and the old who speak and understand Kashmiri as their native tongue. To quote :

The distant meadows are in blooms,
Hast thou not heard my plaint ?
Flowers bloom on mountain lakes,
Come, let us to mountain meads ;
The lilac blooms in distant woods,
Hast thou not heard my plaint ?

Besides the rich legacy of lyrical output, the Kashmiri genius in course of time produced the narrative (romantic and epic) and occasional satirical poetry. One of the greatest poets of the early 19th century was Mahmud Gami. While he at times produced lyrics of great excellence, his greatest contribution lay in his adaptation of tales of Islamic and Persian traditions, like *Shirin Farhad* and *Yusuf Zuleika*. These easily establish his claim as the greatest narrative poet in Kashmiri. Pandit Prakash Ram of Kurigam produced a Kashmiri verse translation of the great Sanskrit epic, the Ramayana. This has many purple patches and contains quite a few lovely songs. The following lines may be quoted from one of these :

Spring is come, sing thou, O *Bulbul* ;
Let us celebrate the advent of spring.
Frost is gone, roar O cascades,

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Let us wash clean all our sorrows.
Leave thy sleep, is it early still?

This brief and cursory survey of Kashmiri poetry brings us to our own times. In the present century the Kashmiri language received a new impetus on account of various causes. For this development our tribute must go first to a few European scholars—likes Stein, Grierson and Temple—who, after assiduous labours, learnt, studied and then translated some of the classics and folk tales in Kashmiri poetry. The unique beauties of the Kashmiri literary genius were thus revealed to the admiring gaze of the Western scholars. But our greatest homage must go to our contemporary poets who have imparted a new life to our language and literature. Among these the greatest figures are Azad and Mahjur (now, alas, both dead !), Pandit Zinda Kaul and Mirza Ghulam Hassan Beg Arif. These new poets, while carrying forward the old undying traditions of the Kashmiri poetry have, in style and thought and emotion, administered a vital doze of modernism to our native poetic genius. This is quite in keeping with the latest national and international movements that are changing the ideas and influencing the actions of men and women even in the cloistered seclusion of the Happy Valley. But the greatest external influence that has moulded the features of our language and literature has been, as in the case of other modern Indian languages, the impact of powerful forces like Shakespeare, Milton, Shelley and Wordsworth on the minds of all educated Kashmiris in the present generation. Mahjur and Azad may not have studied at any of our colleges but the impact of English education was there, visible or invisible, direct or indirect. So these poets, while preoccupied with the social and political problems of the modern world, also look at nature's beauties through new glasses and express their lyrical or cynical moods in forms of endless variety and beauty.

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PEACEFUL or warlike, outside influence is bound to have its impress upon the culture of a country. Kashmir has a history and a past unlike most other countries. Political vicissitudes have had their effect among other things upon her social anthropology and literature. The Kashmiri language is said to be a branch of the Indo-Aryan language known as Sanskrit, just as Italian is that of Latin. In this connection the celebrated western traveller, Vigne says :

“The language of Kashmir is a pracrit (a corruption of a major language). The Kashmirians, says Abu Fazal, have a language of their own. I was told on good authority that out of one hundred Kashmiri words, twenty five will be found to be in Sanskrit or a pracrit, forty Persian, fifteen Hindustani, ten will be Arabic, some few also Tibetan.”

Kashmir was the home of Hinduism, which yielded place to Buddhism in the time of Asoka in 250 B.C. Buddhist influence lasted for about nine centuries. Hinduism again came to the fore. The Muslim influence started in the 13th century A.D. Hium Tsiang who visited Kashmir in the year 631 A.D. wrote :

“The people of Kashmir love learning and are well cultured. Since centuries learning has been held in great esteem in Kashmir.”

There was a complete fusion of cultures, though broken at times by foreign conquests. Sister Niveditta in her book “Myths of the Hindus and Buddhists” says :

“A single generation enamoured of foreign ways is almost enough in history to risk the whole continuity of civilization and learning. Ages of accumulation are entrusted to the frail bark of each passing epoch by the hand of the past, desiring to make over its treasures to the use of the future. It takes a certain stubbornness, a doggedness of loyalty, even a modicum of unreasonable conservatism may be, to lose nothing in the long march of ages ; and, even when confronted with great empires, with a sudden extension of

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the idea of culture, or with the supreme temptation of a new religion, to hold fast what we have, adding to it only as much as we can healthfully and manfully carry."

Culturally advanced as Kashmir was, her contribution to the folk-tales treasured in the Buddhist Jatakas and the later classic didactic collections of Panchatantra and Kathasaritsagara are assured. It is generally believed that except for the five hundred years upto the 12th century the *Rajatarangini* has for its source well-documented folk-lore. Buddhism spread to the outside world in the East via Kashmir in the 3rd century B. C. when Asoka, its great sponsor, reigned over Kashmir. It attracted the hearts of the Chinese completely by the 4th century A.D.—and the Buddhist missionaries passed from and to India through Kashmir. Somadeva, the author of the Panchatantra was a Kashmiri, who flourished about the 1st century B.C.

It is generally believed that there has been a constant inter-change of folk-tales between the East and the West from the 5th century onwards. Much in advance of that time, Kashmir had established cultural relationship with China because of her community of religion. Kashmiri folk-tales, legends and myths, which had been tagged with the other lore of the times found expression through the medium of the Jatakas and the Panchatantra tales. The material and intellectual expansion of Islam that followed helped, by Persian and Arabic translations, the diffusion of the lore to the West. That the Western nations owe the basis of most of their folk-lore to oriental story books has been established by Clouston in England and Kohler in Germany. The great scholar of France, Emmanuel Cosquin, maintains that all the Western folk-tales had their prototypes in India. Even Theodore Benfey holds that the Western folk-tales were derived from India. Except the Holy Bible, there is perhaps no other book which has been translated into so many languages as Panchatantra, of which translations exist in Chinese, Japanese, Greek, Latin, Arabic, German, French, Italian, Swedish, Dutch, Russian and English. In Arabian

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Nights we find mention of lions, jackals, elephants, peacocks etc., which figure prominently in Kashmiri and Indian folk-tales.

From 13th century onwards, the Persian language had the sway and the best in her thought found expression through that medium. The yoke of the brutal subjection of Kashmir had its terrific effect upon the psychology of the people. The ruling classes from time to time, except for the great Zain-ul-Abidin and Akbar, had not only no taste for art and letters but revelled in its destruction. This state of affairs was further supplemented by the cesspool of illiteracy into which the people of the country, scattered over large tracts of scarcely populated areas, were thrown. They had no food but they had tax-collector. The rich literary oral heritage was thus under the pressure of tragic distress born of fear. How could it be otherwise? How could this treasure be preserved or its preservers patronised in such an atmosphere? According to Prof. R. R. Marett, an erstwhile President of the London Folk-lore Society :

“To be a folk-lorist worthy of the name, you must have undergone initiation amongst the folk, must have become one of them inwardly and in the spirit.”

Conditions were absolutely absent for such an attitude of mind on either side. While the fullest possible use has been made of the ancient oral literature of Kashmir, nothing appears to have been done to “harvest” her “land” which is perhaps “not surpassed in fertility” by any other country in the world. The modern world is left with nothing but a collection of not more than 64 recent tales collected by the Rev. Knowles and 25 later by Sir Auriel Stein. This does not do justice to the people of a land throbbing with life.

“The more the people at large have to do with Government the more will the intellectuals and artists have to fight for their ideas and perhaps for their lives” is the view expressed by George Bernard Shaw in respect of art vis-a-vis

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a democratic government. The reverse holds true in the case of Kashmir. Kashmiri art and intellect had already had this experience before the formation of its democratic Government, and it is to be hoped that with the setting up of cultural institutions such as Broadcasting Service and the National Cultural Congress, which are already set on the path of cultural revival, the imaginative capacity of her people will continue to receive a healthy impetus. A local firm of publishers, M/S Ghulam Mohammad Noor Mohammad, have also in recent years done a good bit in rescuing the original oral treasures of the native literature. Their small publications comprise versions in Persian and Kashmiri of the local folk-tales.

Opportunities for exploring the "fields of lore" today are as ample as half a century ago, when Hatim Tilwaney recited with the exactitude of a gramophone record six stories in prose, 3 songs and three more stories partly in prose and partly in verse before Sir Auriel Stein. Prof. Som Nath Dhar's collection on folk-lore (Hind Kitabs) is an interesting contribution for study.

A new country, they say, is a problem and the old a study. Kashmir has all along, as a result of its chequered history, been a problem country in spite of having had a long and brilliant past. Day to Day conquerors and the new ruling dynasties were generally mainly concerned with the establishment of their foothold for economic exploitation and removing all the "thorns from their way", so that they had little time to dig deep into and drink of the wells of her ancient culture. For the people the political unrest was a sufficient check for the expression of their creative talent.

"Hatim's Tales" represent the first scientific method of recording the folk tales in original along with inter-linear translation in a literary form. W. Crooks, who in his introduction to the book has discussed their value, has tried to collect parallels to the motifs in the oriental stocks. The collection by Rev. Knowles has the variants of a tale and its

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different incidents properly arranged, unlike Hatim's. Here the narrator, unlike Hatim, who had crammed the stuff at the feet of his "Ustad" with gramophonic accuracy, is a farmer, an ignorant man in the street, a learned Pandit, a physician, a labourer or a barber and as such his narrations are a better mirror of the practices, ideas and beliefs of the people.

"The song is beautiful through its harmony and the tale through its narrative style"—so goes the adage. Judged from this standard the tales narrated by Hatim stand unquestionable. It cannot, of course, be said that the stories narrated by various sorts of people as found in the collection of Knowles are not exactly as they are known or said in the street or the village. The difference, however, is significant. An intelligent man must understand a story and then he is able to narrate it ; and in this narration some allowance has to be made to the man to provide of his own suitable links to keep the thread. In this way slight variations are bound to occur. But the phenomena such as Hatim Tilwaney provided is perhaps the only one of its kind.

According to Max Muller, "Mythology and folk-tales are a vestigial relic of an allegorical religious literature connected with the worship of natural phenomena". It is not, therefore, for nothing that these stories of the Indian or Kashmiri stock or the motifs thereof have been drawn upon by European countries or vice-versa. Human society in all parts of the world has had to pass through identical stages of cultural development and civilization, where superstitious elements, as in the Aryan religion, held sway. The distribution of these identical conditions at one time or the other among the different nations of the world made for the interchange of the folk-tales. The mythical element has an aetiological purpose : to explain the genesis of the magic word and the original traits of a civilization. Hence the universal presence of hagiographic and apocryphal influence in the folk-tales. Intercourse between the different nations

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provided many names and attributes to the stories and rendered them more appealing to the general reader.

These tales transport one into a new world standing between reality and an utopia. There are "tongues in trees" and "sermons in stone", birds and animals, witches and pious ladies and men and women with powers of metamorphosis. There is a pastoral or court background behind the actions of these combinations of natural and supernatural phenomena. Hopes and longings force their way towards fulfilment and nature is conquered creating a sentimental thrill. Such is the matter which to the philosopher Evgeniy Trubetzkoy provide a study for the "other realms" and to Lenin a matter, which if revised from a social and political view point could produce "beautiful investigations on the hopes and longings" of people.

Here in Kashmir, we have, for instance, the charmingly told story of *Haya Band* and *Zuhra Khatoon*, which is generally recognized to have a purely native origin. Translated as it is without any bowdlerization from a common Kashmiri version, the tale has an originality and freshness not comparing unfavourably with any of the international tales.

"Fear not", said Zuhra Khatoon, gathering some earth and making clay of it. "I will form a head of this".

Thus saying she shaped a head out of the clay like unto her own head, and entreated God to change it into her own head.

God heard this prayer. The clay was at once changed into a human head and dripped with blood.

"Take this", she said, "and give it to the merchant". And the soldier took it and went.

This is exquisite. This is typically Kashmiri, where occultism has roots deeper, perhaps, than in most other countries, where the individual and combined influence of mystic and sorcerous factors have gone a long way in determining the folk life. Parallels may be found in the Genesis

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of "Old Testament" and the Arabian Nights. Such is the creative stuff that answers Roman Jakobson's test : "A work that gains the consensus of collective body and of this only that part, which the collective censorship passes becomes actually folk-lore". Such is the delightful reading which mirrors the deep psychological and hysterical experience of the people and "beguile" one's hours of work and leisure.

Folk songs of Kashmir are as rich in content, theme and form, as any other. Songs known in Kashmiri as "Shaar" are composed on any subject. Exactly, as Paul Lafargue points out, these songs are the "original and natural expression of the people's soul, its companion in joy and sorrow." Nothing is beyond the scope of such imaginative versical rendering from a subtle philosophical thought born of rich calm to the havocs created by a famine or a flood or a personal scandal, light or serious. All sorts of incidents provide inspiration for the rustic muse. Captain Hayward's visit to Ladakh or Shah Jehan's laying of the Shalamar garden have equally provided themes for beautiful songs. There are dancing songs set for different seasons and occasions of the year including various festivals, romantic ballads and mystical pithy verses. There are songs sung in chorus at harvest time, while paddling the boat or carving a drawing room equipment or drawing a beautiful design on cloth with the needle. Then there are opera (Bacha nagma) songs. Operas are common in Kashmir particularly at marriages. Winter nights provide an ideal time for the recitation of ballads. With a bubbling *Hukka* and a boiling *Samovar*, friends, or a family, sit comfortably in an almost air-conditioned room listening to a party of the bards. *Santoor*, the typical Kashmiri musical instrument, and *Tumbakhnari*, play to the accompaniment of a romantic ballad, say of Laila and Majnun. Known for faith and devotion, as they are, the people of Kashmir spend several such nights singing devotional ballads, such as the marriage of Lord Shiva or Krishna Awtara.

Besides their general appeal and entertainment value to

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all individuals who listen to or sing them, the folk-songs form the main occupation of a section of people. It is perhaps because they have the natural potentiality for at once playing the man and the woman. They feature in the operas and go round in a party with different musical instruments to the houses of the people on occasions, such as *Id* or *Shiv Ratri*, sing felicitous folk-songs to the accompaniment of music or a dance.

*"Chai Id amach az nubarik tai,
Wastai yesi astai astai."*
Come slowly and slowly my girl friend,
The Id has come to greet you.

The ladies follow the bridegroom as he leaves his home to marry the bride. They compare him to the great Rostam and sing :

*"Drayi Rostmas maj wanawan
Acha poshin mala karan."*
Rostam's mother went singing
Culling the flowers into garlands.

The bride's people give her the honour of being the daughter of the great saint Shah Hamdan and revel in the fact that the bridegroom has come in person to have her hand. They sing :

*"Shahi Hamdanan koriyea,
Maharaza wotoi yooriyea."*
Shahi Hamdan's daughter
Your bride has come here.

In villages they have their own versions. They sing :

*"Kadal tor maharaza
Abas gaw goora goora,
Asi dop rango bul bul hai aw."*
The Bride has crossed the bridge
The waters are swish and swash,
And we perceived the gaily
coloured Bulbul hath come.

Some of the songs breathe the sylvan atmosphere of the countryside. They also express in a single mood the yearnings and longings of the lovers with, of course, here and there a ring of sorrow in them. Sings the rustic woman :

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"Yar drayom Pompari watea

Kong Poshan wati rot tattea."

My friend hath taken the Pampore road,
But was caught by the saffron flower.

These songs have their own beauty. They are melodious and rich and through them "flows their very life".

No appreciation of a country's folk-lore is complete without a study of her proverbs for, as Bacon points out, these provide the equipment with which to discover the "genius, wit and spirit of a nation". These are an "embodiment of her current and practical philosophy". Kashmir has a rich stock of her proverbs. These are an epitome of the experience of its people in the different spheres of life—social, political, philosophical—and the indelible impress it has left upon their souls. Almost every proverb has a story or a healthy anecdote behind it, which makes it possible to appreciate the genius and the wit of the Kashmiris. While the political composure and economic ease of the ancient past led their spiritual flights into realms unimaginable, the oppression and tyranny of the centuries—old subjugation simply evoked undying expressions of a touched spirit and sharpened wit. Rev. J. Hinton Knowles of the Church Missionary Society in Kashmir did a signal service to the people of Kashmir. In 1885, he immortalized Kashmiri proverbs and sayings in a dictionary on the subject he published that year, and in most cases explained these with the interesting background of the local folk-lore of which these are the cream.

Here are a few stray specimens of the proverbs, which mirror the genius of the common Kashmiri sharpened by his own experience of men and things.

Parallel to the adage "a sinner sinks the boat" we have :

AKI TSAT SUM TA SAS GAW KULI

(One man cut the bridge, and a thousand people fell into the river).

"A very long time ago a large crowd of people were travelling:

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together—perhaps they were going on a visit to some popular shrine. In the midst of the crowd there was a very wicked man who did not seem to be able to think, or say, or do, anything except that which was evil. On seeing a swift and deep stream in front, this wicked man ran on ahead and crossed the ordinary plank bridge built over it; and no sooner had he himself crossed over, than with his big hatchet he hacked at and hewed away the supporting beam of the bridge, until it broke into two pieces and the whole structure fell down, and was soon carried away by the angry waters. Now what were the people to do?—go they must to this place, concerning which they had been making preparation many-a-long-day before. At length two or three of the bolder spirits among them determined to wade the stream; and the others encouraged by their example resolved to venture also. They all started together, but, alas! When they reached the middle of the water the swiftness and depth proving too much for them, they all lost heart, gave themselves to be carried away by the waters, and were drowned."

"Ingratitude more strong than traitor's arms" says Shakespeare. Here we have a saying conveying the same idea :

ANIM SUI, WAVUM SUI, LAJUM SUI PANASUI

(I brought the nettle, I sowed the nettle, and then the nettle stung me).

"In olden times there was a famous fakir in Kashmir, who punished himself in the following way. He uprooted a nettle, and fixing some mud upon the palm of his hand, planted the nettle therein. All the day and all the night for several years he held out his hand with the palm uppermost, and the nettle in it. The plant grew and was strong and by reason of this, thousands of Hindus used to visit the fakir, and give him alms.

"The fakir had a disciple who eventually became very jealous of the honour which his master received; and one day in a fit of anger, he hit the nettle, earth and all, out of his master's hand. The fakir then spoke the above saying concerning both the nettle and his disciple, whom he had brought up and nourished from his infancy.

"The sting-nettle is a plant sacred to Shiva, who is said to have first planted it. Hindus pluck the leaves, and throw them over the god's favourite symbol, the lingam."

Here is a pithy statement of how maddening influence catches :

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BABAH MATYOV TAH DED TIH MATEYIH

(The father has become mad and the mother also has become mad).

"During a certain king's reign the gods determined that the people should become mad from drinking the ordinary water. Now the king's wazir being versed in astrology discovered this matter and at once told the king of it privately." 'O, king,' said he, 'after one month all your subjects will lose their reason from drinking the water of the country.' 'What shall we do?' said the king, 'that we two, at all events, may be saved.' 'Procure water at once,' replied the wazir 'and store it up in skins.' The king did so, and the result was that at the time appointed, when all the people were raving mad, he and the wazir were perfectly sane. It happened, however, that the whole country being quite beyond governing, the people were murdering one another and doing the most strange acts. At length some determined to slay the king and his wazir, and so in order to save themselves these two also drank of diseased water and became mad. Then it was that the father and mother were mad, and the above saying was first spoken."

An interesting story about the maintenance of *status quo* is provided by Birbal, a Minister of Akbar, the greatest maker of fun.

BIR BALUN KAT

(Bir Bal's ram).

"One day in reply to some ministers, who were slandering Bir Bal, Akbar said: 'Never mind, if Bir Bal is a Hindu, he is a wise and clever man, and worthy of the confidence which I have in him. Shall I prove to you his wisdom and shrewdness? Call all the ministers.'" Akbar then gave to each minister a ram, and ordered them to feed each—his ram for the space of two months, and to take care that at the end of that period, they should not be heavier or lighter than they were then at that moment. He also caused the name of each minister and the weight of his ram to be written down.

"Bir Bal took his ram and fed it in the usual way, but constantly kept a dog near it. The consequence was that the poor ram from very fear did not become any fatter or thinner, but was altogether in *status quo* at the end of the allotted time. Some of the other ministers gave their rams grass in the morning, and not at night; and some fed their rams one day and not the next day; and in various other ways they tried to keep them in the same condition; but at the end of the two months, when all the ministers and their rams were again assembled before Akbar, only Bir Bal's ram was

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found to be the right weight. "Did I not tell you," said the king, "that he was wiser and better than you all?"

"Bir Bal's ram". These words are quoted, when any person counteracts whatever good he may have done by performing some evil work, e.g., a Kashmiri would cite these words against a man who was especially liberal to a servant one day, and flogged him severely in a fit of temper on the following day."

An idea of the sufferings of the people of Kashmir by famines and the consequent effect on their morale and self-respect can be had from the following saying :

DRAG TSALIH TAH DAG TSALIH NAH

(The famine will disappear, but the stains will not disappear).

"During one of the terrible famines that have now and again visited Kashmir, a brother was nearly dead from want of food when he suddenly remembered a long-forgotten sister, and determined to go to her and see whether she could help him. On his arrival his sister happened to be making bread; but she was too sharp for him. She had seen him coming, and guessing the reason of his long-deferred visit, took up the burning hot bread and hid it under her arm. Her bosom was very much scorched by this and she retained the mark of the burn up to the time of her death.

"Kashmir has suffered very much in morale from famines. Driven to extremities the people seem to have lost all sense of self-respect. A little knowledge of the people and their language quickly convinces one too forcibly of the truth of the above words."

They say it is good to have a wise enemy than a foolish friend. Here is a piece about stupid friendship :

HAPAT YARAZ

(A bear's friendship).

"A bear formed friendship with a man who was passing through his jungle. For some time he brought his friend large quantities of honey. One day the man fell asleep after eating the honey. While asleep a bee attracted by the sweetness alighted upon his mouth. The friendly bear seeing this thought that he would save the man from the pain of a sting, and so he went and fetched a great piece of rock and aimed it with all his might at the bee, but killed the man!"

The yogi of Harmukh will live through the ages. Today his comic aspect is revived as soon as one comes across a person of bad memory :

FOLK AND LORE

HARAMUKHUK GOSANI

(The jogi of Haramukh)

"There was a jogi who tried to mount Haramukh. Every day for twelve years he climbed to a certain height, and every night for the same space of time he descended as far as he had ascended. How it came to pass he could not tell. Perhaps he was a somnambulist. At any rate every morning he found himself reposing quietly in the very spot, whence he had started on the previous morning.

"One day, the last day of these 12 years, a shepherd was seen by this jogi coming down from the mountain. The jogi asked him whether he had reached the summit and what he had seen there. The shepherd replied that he had reached the top of the mountain, and had seen a sweeper with this wife, and they were milking a bitch with a human head, and they had asked him to drink that milk, which he had refused to do, because he thought that it was unholy; and then they threw some *tika** upon his face which, perhaps, was there now. The jogi knew that the supposed sweeper and his wife were none other than the God and Goddess, Shiva and Parvati, and so he went close up to the shepherd's face and licked off the *tika*. He was then caught up into the clouds much to the astonishment of the poor shepherd.

"The reason the shepherd was able to climb the mountain and the jogi unable, was, that the shepherd went up heedlessly and totally ignorant of the great deities who resided on the summit. ("An ignorant man fears nothing.")

"A boy with a dull memory works hard all the evening, and the next morning when he comes to appear before the school master, he finds that he knows nothing, and is like the jogi, as he was, and where he was, before."

Smaller men are subjugated to drudgery by well-established seniors. Their helpless resentment against this fagging is expressed in the following saying :

KUB-KUL KUS? MUTIH HUND TULAH KUL.

(Which is the crooked tree? Mut's mulberry-tree).

"Who is the fag? The badly-paid, hardworked junior servant. Gopal Mut had a garden, in which was a stumpy and crooked mulberry tree. All the boys and the girls of the neighbourhood were wont to come and annoy Gopal very much by climbing his tree. It

**Tika* is a symbol of Hindu religion.

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would sometimes be filled with children, singing and shouting and making a great noise. In short, this tree was a source of nuisance to Gopal and every body around. The regular reply to the question, "where shall we play to-day?" was at "Gopal Mut's mulberry tree." Every little boy or girl could climb it, it was so small; and nearly every child in the neighbourhood did.

"The above saying is frequently cited by the underservant in any establishment, who is consequently imposed upon by the other servants. They are so small in years and inferior in position, that every body feels a perfect right to send them there or command them here, or to tell them to do this, that, or the other thing."

Extreme economic distress is synonymised with the only piece of cloth that the King Nala of epic fame in Maharastra was left with :

NALA RAZUN PALAW

(Nala Raja's piece of cloth).

"Nala Raja began his reign well. He was just and holy and every body respected him. But it chanced that one day while he was out eating the air, he saw two or three men gambling, and noticing that each one seemed to be excited over the game, he thought that it must be a very interesting means of amusement and determined to learn it. Accordingly when he got back to his palace he called his wife and began to gamble with her. He grew more and more interested in gambling, until at last under one or another form it was his hourly amusement. He was wont to lay very high stakes, some times a palace, some times an army, and some times a lakh of rupees. Rajas and other great men came from distant countries to play with him; and as he was more often unsuccessful than successful, he soon lost all his country and his fortune, and escaped into a foreign land. He was wandering with his wife in a jungle in the strange land one day, when nothing remained to them but one large wrap, which they cut into two pieces and made two wraps of it. The Raja told the Rani, Damyanti by name, to walk about the jungle in one direction and see what she could obtain; and he would go in another direction. A peasant who happened to be in the jungle met the Rani and gave her three dried fish. She took them to her husband with great delight, and he told her to go and wash them in the river. As she was washing them behold! amrit, the water of life, came forth from her thumb and touching the fish made them alive again, and they escaped in the river. She went and told her husband, who did not believe her, but thought that she had eaten the

fish. The poor woman was very much hurt at her husband's want of confidence in her, and was in much fear lest he should forsake her—leave her alone in that desolate jungle. So she arranged the bedding (which consisted only of the divided wrap) in such a way as that the Raja could not possibly arise from his bed in the night without disturbing her. He was enveloped in one side of the wrap, upon the other side of which she was lying. The Raja, however, defeated her plans by cutting his piece of the wrap and ran away. On the road a snake bit him and his whole countenance turned quite black and was so changed that nobody would have recognised in him the Nala Raja. However, he survived and went and took service in another Raja's establishment.

"The Rani finding in the morning that her husband had abandoned her, resolved to go unto her father's house. Her parents were terribly shocked and grieved to find their daughter in such a state. They comforted her, arrayed her again in fitting garments, and promised her, that if her husband did not appear by a certain date, they would arrange for another marriage. News was sent to all the Rajas to appear at a certain date, because one of them would be chosen as the future husband of the beautiful girl.

"Among the many other Rajas which were present on the appointed day was the Raja in whose service the Nala Raja was employed. Nala Raja also went with him; and when he had opportunity on the way, he related to his master all that had happened to him,—his gambling propensities, his ruination, of life in the jungle and his abandonment of his wife there. When the Raja heard this he was dumbfounded with astonishment, and fell at his feet, "My brother", said he, "why did you not tell me all this before?" And he gave unto him his own mantle sword, and appointed unto him a full number of servants. Thus they reached the Rani's parents. Thus the other Raja introduced Nala Raja and recounted all that he had heard.

"Great was the rejoicing in the palace that day and many days afterwards for the lost husband and son had been found. How glad was Nala Raja! How happy was Rani Damyanti! Gifts were lavished upon them; they again lived in a grand house; had servants and horses, and every luxury; and were happy ever afterwards."

"Pride hath her fall", they say. To the people of Kashmir Namrood provides a typical example of what fate, lack of humility meets. Namrood was known for his boasting:

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NAMRUDUN HYUH DAM DIWAN

(He boasts like Namrood).

"King Namrood was a great oppressor, and became so proud and independent as to say there was no God ; and if there was, he dared him to do his worst. At last there came a voice from heaven bidding him to repent ; but Namrood thought scorn concerning it. Then God sent a mosquito which entered Namrood's nose and penetrated to the brain, causing him constant agony. Every time pain came, the king used to send for his servant to beat him a hundred blows upon the left temple with a shoe. Eventually he was so worn by the pain that he died."

Here is a small anecdote which establishes the truth of the saying that the pamperedness of a "spoilt child" paves the way for his own destruction :

NEMAZI SUNZ UNGUJ

(The finger of the prayer).

"A Pathan of high family while saying his prayers in the Juma Masjid here was very much annoyed by another man poking him behind. He gave him one rupee to desist. The man left off annoying this worshipper but was encouraged by the present to prosecute his wickedness upon some other worshipper. The other man, however, was not of such quiet disposition as the Pathan, for he at once rose up, drew his sword and struck off the troubler's head with one stroke."

Humility attends greatness and in Kashmir it is compared to the softness of Pashmina :

PASHMINASUI CHHEN NARMI

(Only Pashmina has softness).

"Pashmina is a fine kind of woollen cloth manufactured in Kashmir. The finest goat's wool employed in its manufacture is brought from Turfan, in the Yarkand territory. This is called Turfani phamb ; all other qualities are called Kashmiri phamb ; though these as well as the former are found only on the animals who live on the wind-swept steppes of Central Asia."

That faith has a supreme place in matters of soul, has been recognized by all. Here is how Birbal proved it to Akbar :

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PIR NAH BOD YAKIN BOD

(The pir is not great, faith is great).

"One day Akbar asked Birbal, which was the greater, the pir or the faith. Birbal replied "Faith is the greater". The emperor said, "You are wrong". The pir is the greater of the two". Birbal was silent.

"On leaving the emperor, Birbal went and buried an ass's head in a certain place, and ordered that a mosque should be built over it.

"Some years after this event, Akbar was exceedingly troubled by his enemies and took counsel with his wazir as to what he should do. Birbal advised him to go and pray for forty days in a certain mosque, and promised that if he would offer prayers there with a pure heart, God would certainly hear him and give him the victory over his enemies. The emperor obeyed and vanquished his enemies.

"One afternoon, when Birbal was alone with Akbar, he referred to their conversation some years ago, and asked the emperor whether he remembered it. The emperor replied "Yes"; and that he was of the same opinion still. Then Birbal asked Akbar to accompany him to the mosque, where he had spent forty days in prayer, and see for himself what there was under its foundations. The building was razed to the ground, the foundations were dug up, and there, to the great astonishment of the one and great amusement of the other was discovered the skeleton of the ass's head. Akbar remarked: "You were right, Birbal. Faith is greater than the pir".

"Akbar supposed that the mosque had been erected over the bones of some Muhammedan saint, and with faith in this he prayed".

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“And yet Kalhana's book is something far more than a record of kings' doings. It is a rich store-house of information, political, social and to some extent economic. We see the panoply of the middle ages, the feudal knights in glittering armour, quixotic chivalry and disgusting cruelty, loyalty unto death and senseless treachery ; we read of royal amours and intrigues and of fighting and militant and adulterous queens. Women seem to play quite an important part, not only behind the scenes but in the councils and the field as leaders and soldiers. Some times we get intimate glimpses of human relations and human feelings, of love and hatred, of faith and passion. We read of Suyya's great engineering feats and irrigation works ; of Lalitaditya's distant wars of conquest in far countries ; of the building of temples and monasteries and their destruction by unbelievers and iconoclasts who confiscated the temple treasures. And then there were famines and floods and great fires which decimated the population and reduced the survivors to misery.”—Jawaharlal Nehru.

Kashmir occupies the pride of place among the various nations of Asia who can boast of having a recorded history extending to thousands of years past. All this we owe to the great Kashmiri, Kalhana Pandita.

India has never known among its *Sastras* the study of history such as Greece and Rome cultivated or a modern Europe understands it. Indeed, it has been said of India of the Hindus that it possessed no history. The remark is true if we apply it to history as a science and art. In view of the antiquity and the developed character of the Indian civilization it would indeed be ridiculous to find India bereft of historical sense ; but what is really essential is the fact that, despite the abundance of literature, history is so miserably represented, and that in the whole of the period of Sanskrit literature there is no one writer who can be seriously regarded as a critical historian.

The achievement of Kalhana assumes momentous significance in the light of these observations. The contribution is substantial and fills a wide gap. His "River of Kings" consists of about 8,000 verses classified under eight 'Tarangas' (waves). It is a monumental work in the field of Sanskrit literature, and no other writer in India approaches to the attainments of Kalhana even remotely. From the standpoint of psychology, it is not difficult to understand the view that history had any meaning or value ; but it was unlikely to receive acceptance in India. The prevailing doctrines told distinctly against any such estimate of events. In the strict logical sense of the doctrine of Karma, all men's actions were the outcome of actions done in previous births ; they were, therefore, wholly incalculable, for no one could tell what deed in the remotest past might not spring up to work its inevitable end. Added to this belief, and evidently with wide acceptance, was the view that all things were brought about by fate, working in a manner wholly unintelligible and beyond all foresight. *Rajatarangini* is the only silver lining amidst these dark clouds.

Kalhana's "River of Kings" is neither Voltaire's "History of Russia" or "The Age of Louis XIV" nor Gibbon's "Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire". History for Voltaire was the progress of the human mind. He wanted to trace the steps by which men passed from barbarism to civilization. "Take away the arts and the progress of the mind, and you will find nothing" in any age "remarkable enough to attract the attention of posterity". He maintained that his history should deal not with kings but with movements, forces and masses ; not with nations but with the human race ; not with wars but with the march of the human mind. Kalhana is quite a contrast. His was not only a work of serious contribution to history, it was pre-eminently a work of art (*Kavya*) ; he looked upon himself not merely as a historian but as a *kavi* (poet-seer). Kalhana chose for his work on history the metrical model, since the theory of the period was dominated by a certain class of ideas. "Kalhana's intelligent

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eyes watched the Court and noted what they saw in the hope that centuries later their observations would enlighten distant lands, relight dead suns and set dead moons shining upon the streams and snow-clad mountains of his native land. In one long series as if on a band of gelatine of a cinematograph film Kalhana brings before our eyes vivid pictures of bygone age through episodes which contain the different *Rasas* or sentiments of love and heroism, of pathos and marvel. Although he paints the world of his own time he begins from the beginning of things in Kashmir and the unity of his work of art is not recognised till the reader comes to the end of the story."

Let us have him in his own words regarding the conception of his task :

"Worthy of obeisance is that indefinable virtue of good poets which is superior (in sweetness and immortality) to a stream of nectar, and whereby they preserve their own bodies of glory as well as those of others."

"If a poet can realize with his genius things which every body cannot comprehend, what other indication is wanted that he has the divine sight?"

"Even those who sat at ease with their feet on the temples of elephants, who even obtained prosperity, nay those even in whose palaces once dwelt young damsels fair as moons shining in the day, are not thought of even in dreams by this world, as if they never existed, though they were once the foremost on earth! But why praise thee a hundred times, O brother, work of good poets. Suffice it to say, that the world is blind without thee."

It is his skill as a *kavi*, the merit of his poetic composition, which is to save from oblivion the history of his country. Rome, long after Thucydides and Polybios, saw in history only a matter for the display of rhetorical skill and a collection of facts for the inculcation of moral principles. We have only to substitute *Alankarasastra* for the art of the rhetor in order to realize the resemblance between this attitude and Kalhana's conception of his task.

From the indications scattered through the narrative we can gather some instructive facts regarding the author's

personality and the time and the surroundings in which he lived. Napoleon lives through the pages of Abbot, and Johnson had his Boswell. Kalhana had none. Though we have little direct information about him, we can gather from his poems a far more definite impression of his personal character than is usual with Indian poets. Compared with Kalidasa, who is a mere name, the subject of anecdotes clever and stupid, Kalhana stands out as a definite and rather attractive personality. We owe his activity as a chronicler in all probability to the internal struggles of Kashmir.

Kalhana tells us that he began his work in the Saka year 1070 corresponding to the year 4224 of the Laukika era (1148 A.D.) and he finished it in the year 4225 (1149 A.D.). Both the East and the West were in the clutches of the feudal system then. It was a period when the Industrial Revolution and technocracy were still slumbering in the womb of time. The invention of gunpowder and the printing press had yet to revolutionize human thought. He had not heard of the advocacy of the rights of man nor the denunciation of monarchy but he says many things about them in his strictures and caricatures of kings and priests, their morals and methods. It is certain that he had not known want and had never worked for a living, since he was the son of a minister of state as communicated to us in the colophon. In the several passages which mention Canpaka (his father) we find the latter invariably spoken of with evident respect for his character and activity. We first meet him as Lord of the Gate (*dvarpati*) or commandant of the frontier defences. On the occasion of the king's expedition against the castle of Dugdhaghata on the Darad frontier, shortly before A.D. 1099, Canpaka's success in effecting the investment of that mountain stronghold notwithstanding the intrigues of official rivals is specially eulogized.

When relating Harsa's desperate struggle for his own crown and life, Kalhana mentions Canpaka amongst the last few officials who loyally stood by the king's side.

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From the mention of Parihasapura as Kanaka's birth place, we may infer that the town was the original home of Kalhana's family.

A Brahman by descent, he was a Saiva by faith. But throughout his narrative he maintains a friendly attitude towards Buddhism. His composition proves amply that his studies in the departments of traditional learning (rhetoric and grammar) had been both thorough and extensive. His acquaintance with the older standard *kavyas*, such as the "Raghuvamsa" and "Meghaduta," may be assumed *a priori*, and is proved in fact by several evident reminiscences. He seems to have carefully studied "Vikramankadevacarita," the historical poem of his fellow-country man—Bilhana. We may safely ascribe to him a very intimate knowledge of the Mahabharata. Whenever he desires to illustrate his narrative by reference to similar events or to emphasize a point of moral judgement, he turns to this vast store-house of traditional lore. His quotations from Ramayana are no less numerous. We may safely surmise that the study of the sacred epics had directly influenced Kalhana in the choice of his task. He also devoted some time to the *Jyotishsastra* as shown by the references made to the passages of Varamihira's "Brhatsamhita".

There is a curious reference about him as Kalyana in Mankha's "Srikanthacarita" who was his fellow countryman and contemporary. Mankha gives us a detailed description of a literary assembly held at the house of his brother, (the minister Alamkara), at which he submitted his poem to a gathering of scholars and officials. He introduces to us the guests present on the occasion by their names, in each case adding some appropriate details as to their respective Sastras and personal attainments. Mankha in his account of the "Sabha" devotes three verses to a complimentary notice of the Kavi Kalyana. He describes him as holding a distinguished position among the expert masters of the Kavya, as a person whom "the illustrious Alakadatta thought capable of

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accomplishing fully his chosen task (as a composer of poetry)."

Kalhana tells us himself that he was not the first to seek to write a chronicle of the kings of Kashmir from the earliest days ; it appears that extensive works of ancient date contained the royal chronicles, but these had apparently disappeared in his time. He consulted, as he says, eleven works of scholars as well as the extant "Nilamatapurana". Polymath Ksemendra had written a *Nrpavali* which Kalhana censures for want of care. From Padmamihira, who drew considerably on Pasupata Helaraja, he took eight kings beginning with Lava who came first after the gap of thirty-five lost kings in Book I. From Chavillakara, whose text he cites, he derived some really historical information regarding Asoka and his devotion to Buddhism.

But Kalhana used much more original sources to check his literary authorities. He tells us that he inspected inscriptions of various kinds, those recording the construction of temples, memorials, or palaces, records of land grants or privileges (usually on copper plates), *Prasastis*, eulogies engraved on temples and other buildings, and manuscripts of literary works, which often recorded names of rulers and dates. He also studied coins and inspected buildings—and he was a master of the topography of the Valley.

We are able to realize the political and social conditions in which Kalhana lived with a degree of accuracy rarely attainable in the case of any old Indian author. His work gives us a detailed knowledge of the old topography of Kashmir. This again, combined with the narrow limits and distinct geographical character of the country, enables us to restore with precision the local milieu in which he lived.

The commencement of the 12th century is marked in the history of Kashmir by an important dynastic revolution which brought about material changes in the political state of the country. King Harsa, whose rule (A.D. 1089-1101)

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seems at first to have secured a period of consolidation and of peace, subsequently fell a victim to his own Nero-like propensities. Heavy fiscal exactions necessitated by a luxurious court, and a cruel persecution of the Damars, who formed the landed aristocracy, led to a rebellion under the leadership of the brothers Uccala and Sussala, two relatives of Harsa from a side branch of the Lohara dynasty. Harsa succumbed in the struggle and had a tragic death by murder.

During the following seven years civil war continued almost without interruption. The greatest portion of Kalhana's life passed in what was for Kashmir one long period of civil war and political dissolution.

The dynastic revolution which had cost King Harsa his throne and life, had a lasting effect on the fortune of Kalhana's family. His father who in Harsa's reign had occupied one of the highest posts of old Kashmir administration played no longer any part in public life after that monarch's death. Besides, his work makes it quite clear that he himself never held office under any of the rulers of the new dynasty or otherwise enjoyed their special favour.

"That noble-minded (poet) is alone worthy of praise whose word, like that of a judge, keeps free from love or hatred in relating the facts of the past."

Kalhana's detachment enabled him to appreciate dispassionately the demerits of his own country-men. He avails himself often of the opportunity furnished by historical incidents to expose with humorous sarcasm the inveterate cowardice and empty bragging of Kashmiri soldiery. We read of armies which disperse at the sight or even the rumour of a resolute foe, of rival forces which both tremble in fear of each other. Murder by a few ruffians in the royal palace is usually followed by a general stampede of guards, courtiers, ministers, and troops. The uncompromising realism with which Kalhana paints such scenes leaves no doubt as to the estimate which experience had led him to form of his country-men's military valour.

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To emphasize his opinion still further, Kalhana more than once brings in contrast the bravery of the "Rajaputras" and other mercenaries from abroad, who in his own times were evidently the mainstay of the rulers.

By the side of the treason, even rife in the royal court and camp, he does not fail to notice the callous indifference with which the people were prepared to welcome any change. His graphic descriptions of the idle and disaffected city crowds and the feelings that swayed them, show how thoroughly he understood the nature of his compatriots.

Looking at Kalhana's attitude towards the various classes of contemporary society, we note in the first place the open aversion and contempt he shows for the Damars. The overweening power and turbulence of these feudal land-holders had been the direct cause of King Harsa's fall and all the trouble which sapped the country during Kalhana's time. The term *dasyu* 'robber' which he regularly uses for their designation is characteristic enough. He makes hard hits against the vices of the 'Kayasthas'. The numerous satirical allusions to the petty officials' oppression and greed and the evident relish with which Kalhana details their discomfiture at the hands of more energetic rulers, suggest that he had ample occasion to study their character by personal experience.

Kalhana does not hide his contempt for the priestly class whose ignorance was equal to its arrogance, and bitterly complains of their baneful influence in affairs of state. In the humorous descriptions he freely ridicules their combined self-assertions and cowardice and shows scant respect for their sacred character. "It is impossible to peruse the chronicle, and in particular its later portions, without realizing that the poet who wrote it, had an observant eye and an open mind for the affairs of the world around him. He displays no little knowledge of human nature, intimate acquaintance with his country's material conditions, interest in antiquarian details even of the humblest kind, and in the

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facts of every-day life. All these features show us Kalhana in a light very different from that of the ordinary Indian Kavi." (*Stein*)

Kalhana's philosophy of history is not definite, but he repeatedly refers to Providence or Destiny. He never tires of expatiating on the inscrutable and perverse ways of this highest of factors. Human actions projected in every direction by the force of interest, passion or crime appeared to cancel each other, or to become lost in nothingness. Perhaps Kalhana's reason led him to agree with critical philosophy of Nagarjuna, the Kant of Buddhist Kashmir, when he writes : "To begin with there is nothing, certain it is that hereafter there is nothing, during the interval, by chance, he reacts swiftly to the controlling states of pleasure and pain. Like an actor, without head and feet, having acted his part repeatedly a particular living being disappears behind the screen of existence—nor do we know where he goes."

Kalhana knew that everything withered with age and decayed in time ; only the artist could seize the passing form and stamp it in a mould that resists mortality :

" Even the gods must die ;
But sovereign poetry remains,
Stronger than death ".

GENERAL BACKGROUND

THE Jammu and Kashmir State occupies an area of 84,471 square miles.

The State is composed of three cultural units—Jammu, Ladakh and the Valley.

The two principal cities of the State are Srinagar and Jammu, the summer and winter headquarters of the Government respectively.

The State was governed until 1948 by the Maharaja with the paramountcy resting in the British Crown Representative in India.

The State was one of the most backward units of India. About ninety percent of the people earned their living from agriculture. The methods of agriculture were primitive and land was owned by rich landlords and a handful of *jagirdars*. A large majority of farmers was landless and, inevitably, steeped in indebtedness. Starvation and disease had a free play in almost all parts of the State.

Life in urban areas was no better. Artisans, weavers, traders and other professional people were subjected to exorbitant taxes. Unemployment was a frequent scourge, often driving people to desperation.

The rich potential mineral wealth and abundant water resources of the State were left untapped. There were, consequently, no industries worth the name and pressure on agriculture increased day after day.

The people lived in abject poverty. Disease and ignorance stalked the land. As late as 1940 the percentage of literates was only 6.6 and the total number of women literates did not exceed 42,151.

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But the people did not submit to these hard conditions of life without protest and indignation. In the beginning, these murmurs were faint, often sporadic and restricted to isolated sections of people. Gradually, a movement arose for elementary liberty and normal civic rights. In the early thirties of the century the movement became quite powerful and the authorities came down on it with a heavy hand. But savage repression could not stem the tide of a mass upsurge and the movement continued to grow.

This movement for freedom from autocratic rule and for establishment of a democratic order in the State was led by the National Conference. The programme of this organisation, outlined in the "New Kashmir," envisaged the establishment of a democratic Government in the State, chosen by a popular vote and responsible to an elected legislature.

The State's freedom movement received constant support and assistance from the bigger national movement of the country. Mahatma Gandhi, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and other leaders added their powerful voice to the voice of the people of Kashmir. They came to the aid of the people when repression and terror reigned supreme. In 1946 when the people of the State launched the historic "Quit Kashmir" struggle, Pt. Nehru was arrested by the State authorities when in defiance of the ban on his entry he entered the State to help the people.

In sharp contrast to this, the leaders of the All India Muslim League, not only withheld their support from the movement, but came out openly and unashamedly in support of the autocracy. Mr. Jinnah, the then leader of the Muslim League, even maligned the struggling Kashmiri people as "mal-contented out to destroy law and order".

This was one of the main reasons why Kashmiri Muslims kept themselves away from the communal politics of

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the Muslim League and opposed tooth and nail its pernicious 'two-nation' theory.

Pakistan's Invasion and After.

The British withdrew from India in August, 1947, and the country became free after centuries of alien rule. At the same time, the sub-continent was partitioned and a separate Dominion of Pakistan came into being. The Pakistan Government, soon after it was established, imposed an economic blockade on Jammu and Kashmir. The flow of essential commodities into the State along Jhelum Valley Road was stopped without any warning and in violation of agreements in force. The Pakistan authorities prevented State trading agencies from importing into the State allotted quotas of petrol (3,84,000 gallons), wheat (17,000 maunds), salt (5,500 maunds), kerosene oil (5,000 tins) and cloth (189 bales). Consequently, the people in the State were faced with an acute shortage of these commodities and had to suffer great hardship and privation. As subsequent events established, these measures were aimed at coercing the State into joining Pakistan.

While the economic blockade was continuing, the State was subjected to armed invasion from Pakistan territory in the Punjab and the North Western Frontier Province. On September 3, 1947, a gang of 300 men armed with spears and guns waylaid and murdered a subject of the State near Samba. Another armed band of 400 Pakistani nationals attacked the village of Dohali, 12 miles south-east of Ranbirsinghpura in the Jammu Province. The marauders looted the village and burnt down houses. These armed incursions into State territory increased in number and magnitude and developed into a multipronged invasion of the territories of the State. On October 20, 1947, a large column of Frontier tribesmen attacked the State borders near Muzaffarabad. The invaders were armed with Bren and Sten guns, heavy mortars, howitzers, anti-tank rifles and

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land mines. Subsequently the place of tribal marauders was taken over by Pakistan Army.

After Muzaffarabad, the invaders captured Domel, Uri, Baramulla and Pattan and headed towards Srinagar itself. The captured towns were pillaged and burnt down and the inhabitants subjected to murder, rape and torture. The hydro-electric installation at Mahora which supplied power to Srinagar and other towns in Kashmir was destroyed.

The invaders did not spare anyone in their pillage, rapine and murder. Several European members of the Staff of St. Joseph's Convent, Baramulla, were also killed in cold blood. A member of the Staff, Father George Shanks, who witnessed the killings himself, described to Mr. Sydney Smith, the *Daily Express* (London) correspondent, how these invaders burst into a ward of the hospital attached to the Convent and fired at patients. A 20-year old nurse tried to protect a Muslim lady patient who had just delivered. She was shot first; the patient next. Then as soon as the Mother Superior knelt over the dead body she was attacked and robbed. The Assistant Mother saw a tribesman point a rifle at Mother Superior and in jumped in front of her. A bullet went through her heart and she fell dead. Then the Mother Superior herself was shot. Col. Dykes, a retired officer of the British Indian Army, was also shot. Mrs. Dykes ran from her husband's room to help him. She too was shot dead.

The gruesome murder of European officials of the Convent and other barbarities indulged in by invaders have been recorded in the eye-witness accounts of several foreign correspondents. Mr. Robert Trumbull, the *New York Times* correspondent, reported from Baramulla on November 10, 1947: "The city had been stripped of its wealth and young women before the tribesmen fled in terror." An Associated Press photographer, said in a despatch to *Chicago Daily Tribune* that he saw more than 20 villages in flames. The

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villages had been set fire to by "Muslim invaders" who are scouring the valley, he added.

The armed tribesmen were recruited, trained and armed by Pakistan Government. Captured vehicles used by invaders bore Pakistani number plates. Petrol, which was then a rationed commodity in Pakistan, was made available to them by the authorities. Besides, the invaders were allowed to use Pakistan territory as the base of operations against the State.

A glaring example of Pakistan's aggression in Kashmir is afforded by happenings in the strategic frontier area of Gilgit. The Gilgit Agency was leased by the Maharaja to the British in 1935 for a period of 60 years. With the exit of the British from India, the lease terminated and the civil and military control of the Agency reverted back to the Maharaja. Consequently, the Government deputed its Governor to Gilgit in August, 1947.

Soon after, the Gilgit scouts, led by Major Brown, revolted against established authority and imprisoned the Governor. The rebels received all possible aid and assistance from the Pakistan Government. The Gilgit territory, a part of Jammu and Kashmir State, was subsequently brought under the direct control of Pakistan Government which deputed a Political Officer to rule over the area. The illegal occupation of Gilgit by Pakistan is a clear proof of its aggression in Kashmir.

Having brought a large stretch of territory under their occupation, the Pakistan invaders were now threatening Srinagar itself. It was at this grave hour of Kashmir's history that the National Conference gave a call for resistance to Pakistani invaders. The people rallied as one man around the National Conference. Volunteer committees were formed and a National Militia set up. The National Conference took over the administration and maintained ceaseless vigilance against enemy infiltration into the city. Perfect communal

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harmony prevailed in Kashmir and Hindus and Muslims alike joined the volunteer forces of the National Conference. The *Times* (London) wrote that "inspite of the proximity of the raiders and comparatively heavy fighting 4½ miles west of Srinagar, Srinagar remains calm and business continues as usual". The paper added that the "situation is quite unreal" and can be explained by the fact that the National Conference has continued to instil confidence into the citizens. The people in occupied areas responded magnificently to the call for resistance. Many Kashmiri Muslims fell in the battle. Prominent among them were Mohammad Maqbool Sherwani and Master Abdul Aziz.

But the people were defenceless, and, although they held up the enemy's onrush, prolonged resistance to well-trained and well-equipped invaders became out of question. The invaders were meanwhile pushing ahead, destroying and looting whatever came their way, and the city of Srinagar stood in grave peril. The National Conference decided that the only way to save Kashmir from the marauders was to accede to India and ask for help. Consequently, the Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession and the Jammu and Kashmir State became legally and constitutionally a part of the Union of India.

The first contingent of the Indian Army arrived in Srinagar on October 27 and more reinforcements poured into Kashmir thereafter. The arrival of troops sent a thrill of joy all over the State and Kashmiris came out in thousands to welcome the sentinels of peace and freedom.

The decision to accede to India was not only natural in the circumstances but also the logical outcome of the ideals and objectives of the freedom movement. Its own experience in Kashmir and the understanding of the role of the National Congress and Muslim League in the Indian freedom struggle in general and vis-a-vis the State people's movement in particular had convinced the National Conference leadership that the Kashmiri people's movement for

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freedom and national progress could flourish only as part of the broader movement of the Indian people. The community of ideals and principles established between the people's movement of Kashmir and the rest of the country in the course of about two decades served as the natural basis for Kashmir's accession to India.

The National Conference leadership rejected the alternative of Kashmir's accession to Pakistan, not only because Pakistan had committed an act of aggression against the State, but also because the principle on which Pakistan was built, as also the internal social and economic structure of that country, ran counter to the ideals and objectives which the people of the State had set themselves.

The decision about the State's accession to India was welcomed by the entire population of Jammu and Kashmir. The National Conference, the largest and the most influential party in the State, upheld the decision. A resolution passed at a special convention held in October, 1948, to consider the matter, declared :

“ This convention has given its serious thought to the question of accession and has examined it in all its aspects and detail. After mature consideration of the issue it is definitely of the opinion that Kashmir, with its unflinching faith in New Kashmir and with the very advanced outlook of the people on the fundamental issues, *cannot find its proper place in Pakistan which today has become the main citadel of reaction and decaying feudalism. Pakistan with its basis in two nation theory and its persistence in the perpetuation of religious distinctions does not and cannot accommodate a programme and an outlook which is the very negative of its basis and conceptions of social justice.*”

The situation that arose from Pakistan's aggression in Kashmir was referred by the Government of India to the Security Council. The world body was approached to call upon Pakistan to desist from pursuing aggressive activities in the State. Unfortunately, the complaint did not receive proper attention and nothing tangible was done to make Pakistan to vacate the aggression. Even today a large part

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of State territory is held by Pakistan. There is complete suppression of civil liberties in that part and the people there are groaning under repression and misrule.

Rehabilitation.

The State's accession to India and the timely help of the Indian Army saved Kashmiri people from further wanton destruction, loot and murder. The heroic men of the Army, supported by the Kashmir Militia, pushed the enemy beyond Uri. The armed threat to Srinagar and to the rest of the valley was removed.

But the treacherous invasion left behind a trail of sorrow and tears. It caused a serious dislocation in the life of the people of the State and threw its entire economy out of joint. Thousands of people found themselves destitute and homeless. They arrived from Pakistan-held areas in a most miserable condition. Hospitals and dispensaries had been demolished by invaders and were in ruins. The equipment had been removed or damaged and stores destroyed. The entire transport organization had broken down. The invaders had also damaged roads, buildings and bridges in the State.

These and several other problems faced the first popular Government which assumed power in October 1947. The National Conference leadership which manned the Emergency Administration did not lose heart; it tackled all those problems one by one. The administration received liberal and selfless support from the Government of India in rehabilitating the State's economy. The Central Government rushed food and other essential supplies for the people of the State.

The most important problem facing the administration was the resettlement of the people displaced from enemy-occupied areas. In April 1948, the number of refugees was 42,136 in Srinagar. It was 700,000 in Jammu Province, of

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which 300,000 were to be looked after in Jammu city alone. Free rations, milk, medicines and clothes were provided to them. They were given shelter in temples, mosques, *gurdawaras* and schools. In Jammu, where the refugee problem was very acute, the displaced persons were housed in Government buildings, schools, cinema halls, factories, etc. In April 1949, in Kashmir Province alone, the number of refugees getting rations stood at 11,080. The cost involved in feeding them amounted to Rs. 4,06,245 in 1948. Schools were opened for the benefit of refugee children. Arrangements for medical aid, water supply and other amenities were also made. The Government set up milk centres for refugee children.

The third problem which confronted the administration was the care of the health of the people, particularly in liberated areas where cholera and typhus had broken out. Despite paucity of medical personnel, the problem was tackled expeditiously. In Srinagar, an isolation hospital was immediately set up for cholera patients, while mobile dispensaries served rural areas. About 200,000 inoculations were carried out. A party of doctors was flown from Delhi to Jammu to render immediate medical aid to refugees there. Within forty-five days cholera was brought under control.

In all this the administration got the active co-operation of the people. People came forth with voluntary work in attending to refugees, reorganising hospitals and helping the Government in various other ways.

Another serious problem demanding urgent attention was the rebuilding of the shattered transport system of the State. Before the partition of India, the entire commerce of Jammu and Kashmir State was carried through the Banihal and Jhelum Valley Roads which were linked with rail-heads at Jammu and Rawalpindi. As a result of the invasion the Jhelum Valley Road was cut off completely and most of the vehicles plying on it were either destroyed or seized by

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Pakistan. To tide over this difficulty the Government set up a transport organisation of its own and brought a fleet of new trucks and buses. This measure helped to maintain the flow of supplies to various parts of the State and also in sending out Kashmir art products, timber etc. for sale in other parts of India.

Economic Progress

The Jammu and Kashmir State is now well set on the road to progress and prosperity as a result of the active and energetic measures adopted during the past few years by the Government. The extent of progress made in different sectors of economy and the volume of developmental work carried out in various parts of the State have been unprecedented in its history.

The activities of welfare departments like education, public health and rural development have considerably expanded. In the sphere of public instruction, the Government have provided free and universal education throughout the State and set up nearly 500 new educational institutions. The significance of this measure is sharply brought out when it is remembered that during the last one century the total number of educational institutions did not exceed 1,000. An increase of over 70 per cent has now been effected in the budget for education.

Land has been distributed among tillers without paying any compensation to dispossessed landlords. This reform, the most drastic in our country, has released agricultural productive forces from feudal fetters. Special emphasis has been laid on measures for rural welfare. Departments dealing with the rural welfare work have been reorganised and expanded. The *Panchayats* which remained a dead institution in the past have been made effective spear-heads of rural welfare. The works grant of the Department has been raised from Rs. 4 lakhs to Rs. 16 lakhs per annum.

The people are fast emerging from the malaise into

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which they had drifted formerly and are actively participating in the nation-building activities. In response to an appeal made some time back by the Prime Minister, Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad, for donation of land for construction of *Panchayat Ghars*, people from all over came forward with generous donations of land. This land is being utilised for the setting up of Community Centres, reading rooms, adult education centres, parks and playgrounds.

New sources of electric power have been tapped and several projects launched for increasing the supply of power. These projects cover not only Kashmir but Jammu as well where power was urgently needed for supply of drinking water and for irrigational and industrial purposes.

An outstanding achievement of recent times has been the successful completion of the low-level Banihal tunnel tube which is regarded as an engineering feat of the first order. The new tunnel provides an all-weather link between the valley and rest of the country.

Considerable improvement has been made in the working of the transport organisation. Internally, the organisation serves to connect the main arteries of trade with Srinagar and Jammu. Externally, it handles the flow of trade from the State to the rest of India and carriage of food-stuffs and essential commodities from the rail-head to Jammu and Srinagar. The organisation has at its disposal a fleet of about 500 vehicles of all types. In 1947 the State did not possess any such organisation.

Large tracts of cultivable area in the State have been exploited for production of foodgrains. In order to bring arid land under cultivation the Government introduced the scheme of lift irrigation. An estimate of progress made in the extension of irrigation facilities can be formed from the fact that during the year 1954-55 alone Rs. 14.71 lakhs were spent on construction of canals while during the year 1943-44 only Rs. 3,21,059 formed the total budget of the Department

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of Irrigation. There has thus been an increase of about 400 per cent in the budget for irrigation.

The farmers are being helped with fertilisers and other chemicals. The Agriculture Department has come forward with several new schemes for the welfare of rural population. These schemes, among other things, aim at preventing fruit, tree and plant diseases. They envisage production of better varieties of paddy, wheat and maize, establishment of fruit nurseries and mass application of chemical fertilisers.

In the sphere of public health, sustained efforts have been made to prevent and eliminate diseases of various types. Over 26,00,000 people have been vaccinated under the B.C.G. campaign. Mass campaigns have been launched against malaria, typhus and venereal diseases. A Chest Diseases Hospital has been set up in Srinagar. The Tuberculosis sections of hospitals in Jammu have been extended and bed-strength raised considerably. Blood Banks at Srinagar and Jammu have been established for the first time. Deep X-Ray units were installed in Hospitals, thus eliminating the practice of patients going outside the State for deep X-Ray therapy. Operation fees have been abolished in hospitals and diet scales increased. A special section of orthopaedic surgery has been opened in Srinagar. Eye specialists from Aligarh toured the rural areas of the State and their mobile medical team treated over 40,000 people. The Government have set up a permanent mobile ophthalmic unit which is to work in the far-flung areas of the State. The growing activities of the Department of Public Health have necessitated a corresponding increase of over 50 per cent in its budget.

The tourist industry, an important source of Kashmir's economy, has made considerable headway. The number of tourists during 1956 has been over 62,000 whereas in 1943-44, the peak tourist year during World War II, the number did not exceed 27,207.

Nearly a lakh of refugees displaced from the Pakistan-occupied areas of the State have been rehabilitated and those

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of them dependent on land for livelihood were provided with land for agricultural pursuits. Colonies and *bastis* of displaced persons have been set up at Jammu, Udhampur, Rajouri and Nowshera for urban rehabilitation. Primary and middle schools have also been set up in areas inhabited by displaced persons.

A series of measures have been adopted to afford general relief to various sections of people in the State. The system of compulsory procurement of foodstuffs from farmers has been abolished. Farmers are now free to dispose of their produce, and there is no compulsion of any kind on them to sell it to the Government. The price offered by the State for paddy voluntarily sold by farmer has been increased while the sale price of rice and wheat (*Atta*) has been brought down in Srinagar and Jammu and the scale of rations per head per month has been increased.

The *abiana* (water tax) assessed on lands irrigated by canals built before 1948-49 has been abolished. Debts advanced by the Co-operative Department, involving a sum of Rs. 17,00,000, have been written off and rural debts scaled down from Rs. 2 crores to Rs. 86 lakhs. The grazing tax has been reduced in order to give relief to migrant people like *Gujjars* and *Bakerwals*.

The pay scales of low-paid employees and teachers have been increased. The minimum salary of a clerk has now been fixed at Rs. 50/- instead of Rs. 30/- per month and of teachers at Rs. 50/- instead of Rs. 20/- per month.

As a measure of relief to low-paid Government employees, the Government have introduced the Low Income Group Housing Scheme with a view to enabling the lower income groups to construct residential houses for themselves.

Another measure of relief to Government employees with incomes upto Rs. 300/- per month has been the grant of dearness allowance from 1st April, 1956. The number of persons benefited by this measure is 44,842 and the expenditure involved amounts to about Rs. 60 lakhs. With a view to

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affording such relief in general, the Government later sanctioned the grant of dearness allowance to employees drawing salaries from Rs. 301 to Rs. 900 with effect from 1st April 1956 as well.

The levy of customs tariff which was a source of indirect taxation, has been abolished. The trade and industry of the State has received a great fillip as a result of this measure.

The frontier area of Ladakh which had remained neglected in the past has received special attention of the Government. A Ministry of Ladakh Affairs has been set up with Shri Kaushak Bakula as the Deputy Minister in charge. Several development schemes have been undertaken in Ladakh. People from Ladakh have been sent for higher agricultural training. A variety of seeds and modern appliances have been made available to cultivators there. Under another scheme for the development of animal husbandry in Ladakh, a veterinary hospital has been set up at Leh and two dispensaries opened at Kargil and Drass. The Government is expediting the implementation of schemes for the development of small-scale industries and handicrafts in Ladakh. A civil air service has been started between Srinagar and Leh. The construction of Leh-Kargil road is in progress.

New Constitution

The Jammu and Kashmir State, as stated earlier, became an integral part of India in October, 1947. The representatives of the State took part in the deliberations of the Constituent Assembly of India. The Constitution as framed by this Assembly conferred a special status on the State and gave it the right to frame its own Constitution. This was done in recognition of the aspirations of the Kashmir national movement which had fought for nearly two decades for establishing a Constituent Assembly in the State. The setting up of the Assembly was also envisaged in the Maharaja's Proclamation of March 5, 1948 whereby power was transferred to the representatives of people. Moreover, the protracted and novel proceedings in the Security Council showed that no

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democratic solution would be found by this world body to solve the issues arising from Pakistan's aggression in Kashmir. Consequently, the National Conference, the largest political party in Jammu and Kashmir, felt that the time had arrived for the State Government to take steps to put an end to the sense of uncertainty in the State. Accordingly, the General Council of the National Conference issued in October 1950 a mandate to the party for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly for the purpose of taking decision on all vital issues concerning the future shape and affiliations of the State. The resolution stated :

"The indecision and unrealistic procedure adopted so far has condemned the people of the State to a life of agonising uncertainty. The All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference is gravely concerned and cannot any longer afford to ignore the perpetuation of these "conditions of doubt and frustration. In the opinion of the General Council, therefore, time has come when the initiative must be regained by the people to put an end to this indeterminate state of drift and indecision."

The General Council, therefore, directed :

"The General Council recommends to the Supreme National Executive of the people to take immediate steps for convening a Constituent Assembly based upon adult suffrage and embracing all sections of the people and all the constituents of the State for the purpose of determining the future shape and affiliations of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. In this sovereign Assembly embodying the supreme will of the people of the State, we shall give ourselves and our children a Constitution worthy of the traditions of our freedom struggle and in accordance with the principles of NEW KASHMIR."

Undeterred by external pressure, the State Government proceeded to take appropriate steps for creating a suitable machinery for holding elections to the Constituent Assembly. The elections were duly held in September 1951 and 75 members were returned from the various constituencies in Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh. In addition, 25 seats were reserved for areas held illegally by Pakistan. The voting took place on

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the basis of adult suffrage and first sitting of the Constituent Assembly was held on October 31, 1951, at Srinagar.

The Constituent Assembly addressed itself to four main tasks. Firstly, to devise a constitution for the future governance of the State. Secondly, to decide the future of the Ruling Dynasty in the State. The third major issue arose out of the land reforms which the Government had carried out. The Assembly was called upon to take a decision on the question of payment of compensation to landlords divested of their landed estates. Finally, the Constituent Assembly was to declare its reasoned conclusion about the issue of accession of the State.

The Constituent Assembly appointed a number of committees, among these were the Constitution Drafting Committee, the Basic Principles Committee, the Fundamental Rights Committee and the Land Compensation Committee.

The Constituent Assembly decided unanimously to :

- (1) terminate the hereditary rule ;
- (2) have an elected Head of the State, and
- (3) pay no compensation to landlords.

The Constituent Assembly also evolved a flag and emblem for the State.

As the work of constitution-making progressed, it became necessary to give effect to certain interim provisions of the Constitution in accordance with the recommendations of the Basic Principles Committee. Some of these decisions involved corresponding changes in the Indian Constitution in respect of those provisions which applied to the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Accordingly, as a result of consultations with the Government of India an agreement was arrived at in July, 1952, on the following issues :

- (a) Residuary Powers,
- (b) Citizenship,
- (c) Fundamental Rights,
- (d) Supreme Court's Jurisdiction,

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- (e) National Flag,
- (f) The President's Powers,
- (g) The Headship of the State,
- (h) Financial Integration,
- (i) Emergency Provisions, and
- (j) Conduct of Elections to Houses of Parliament.

This agreement was endorsed both by the Union Parliament and the Constituent Assembly of the State.

The Constituent Assembly ratified unanimously, on February 6, 1954, the State's accession with India which took place in October, 1947. This decision ended the feeling of uncertainty and suspense in the State and cemented once and for all the unbreakable bonds of relationship between the people of Kashmir and the rest of the country. The Constituent Assembly also adopted on the same day the reports of the Basic Principles Committee and the Committee on Fundamental Rights.

The recommendations of the Constituent Assembly were duly incorporated in the Indian Constitution through a Presidential Order issued on May 14, 1954, thereby enabling the State to share in full measure the assistance and cooperation of the Government of India in the task of economic development. The major tasks having been accomplished, the Drafting Committee set about to give final touches to the Draft Constitution. The Committee finally concluded its labours and presented the Draft to the Constituent Assembly on 29th September, 1956.

The Draft Constitution was debated for over a month. The Assembly unanimously approved and adopted on November 17, 1956, the new Constitution of the State. The members of the Assembly signed the Constitution on November 19. This historic event was celebrated amidst scenes of unprecedented enthusiasm and joy. People all over the State expressed warm approval of the Constitution for it fulfills their long-cherished desires and aspirations. It is

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based on the principles of justice, liberty and equality and assures the dignity of the individual and the unity of the State. The Constituent Assembly dissolved itself on January 26, 1957.

Some of the important features of the Constitution are :

The State : The State of Jammu and Kashmir is and shall be an integral part of the Union of India.

The territory of the State shall comprise all the territories which on the fifteenth day of August, 1947, were under the sovereignty or suzerainty of the Ruler of the State.

Directive Principles of State Policy : The Prime object of the State, consistent with the ideals and objectives of the freedom movement envisaged in "New Kashmir," shall be the promotion of the welfare of the mass of the people by establishing and preserving a socialist order of society wherein all exploitation of man has been abolished and wherein justice—social, economic and political—shall inform all the institutions of national life.

The State shall develop in a planned manner the productive forces of the country with a view to enriching the material and cultural life of the people.

The State shall take steps to separate the judiciary from the executive in the public services and shall seek to secure a judicial system which is humane, cheap, certain, objective and impartial whereby justice shall be done and shall be seen to be done and shall further strive to ensure efficiency, impartiality and incorruptibility of its various organs of justice, administration and public utility.

The State shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing—

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- (a) that all permanent residents, men and women equally, have the right to work, that is, the right to receive guaranteed work with payment for labour in accordance with its quantity and quality subject to a basic minimum and maximum wage established by law ;
- (b) that the health and strength of workers, men and women, and the tender age of children are not abused and that permanent residents are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their sex, age or strength ;
- (c) that all workers, agricultural, industrial or otherwise, have reasonable, just and humane conditions of work with full enjoyment of leisure and social and cultural opportunities ;
- (d) that all permanent residents have adequate maintenance in old age as well as in the event of sickness, disablement, unemployment and other causes of undeserved want by providing social insurance, medical aid, hospitals, sanatoria and health resorts at State expense.

The State shall endeavour—

- (a) to secure to every permanent resident the right to free education upto the University standard ;
- (b) to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years ; and
- (c) to ensure to all workers and employees adequate facilities for adult education and part-time technical, professional and vocational courses.

The State shall strive to secure—

- (a) to all children the right to happy childhood with adequate medical care and attention, and

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- (b) to all children and youth equal opportunities in education and employment, protection against exploitation, and against moral or material abandonment.

The State shall endeavour to secure to all women—

- (a) the right to equal pay for equal work ;
- (b) the right to maternity benefits as well as adequate medical care in all employments ;
- (c) the right to reasonable maintenance, extending to cases of married women who have been divorced or abandoned ;
- (d) the right to full equality in all social, educational, political and legal matters ;
- (e) special protection against discourtesy, defamation, hooliganism and other forms of misconduct.

The Executive : The Head of the State shall be designated as the Sadar-i-Riyasat. The executive power of the State shall be vested in him. He will be elected by a majority of the total membership of the Legislative Assembly. The Sadar-i-Riyasat will hold office during the pleasure of the President.

There shall be a Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister as its head to aid and advise the Sardar-i-Riyasat in the exercise of his functions. The Council of Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the Legislative Assembly.

The State Legislature : There shall be a Legislature for the State which shall consist of the Sadar-i-Riyasat and two Houses to be known respectively as the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council.

The Legislative Assembly shall consist of one hundred members chosen by direct election from territorial constituencies of the State. Twenty-five seats will remain vacant to be filled up by representatives of people living in Pakistan-occupied areas of the State.

The Legislative Council will have thirty-six members. Eleven members shall be elected by the Legislative Assembly

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from amongst persons belonging to Kashmir Province provided that of the members so elected at least one shall be a resident of Ladakh Tehsil and at least one shall be a resident of Kargil Tehsil. Eleven members shall be elected by members of Legislative Assembly from amongst people residing in Jammu Province provided that of the members so elected at least one shall be resident of Poonch and at least one a resident of Doda. Of the remaining 14 members, 4 will be elected by various electorates such as municipal councils, educational institutions etc., 4 will be elected by *Panchayats* and such other local bodies and 6 will be nominated by the Sadar-i-Riyasat.

The High Court : There shall be a High Court for the State consisting of a Chief Judge and two or more judges.

Every Judge of the High Court shall be appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal after consultation with the Chief Justice of India, the Sadar-i-Riyasat, and in the case of appointment of a Judge other than the Chief Justice, the Chief Justice of the High Court and shall hold office until he attains the age of 60 years.

The High Court shall have superintendence and control over all courts for the time being subject to its appellate or revisional jurisdiction and all such courts shall be subordinate to High Court.

The Public Service Commission : There shall be a Public Service Commission for the State.

The Chairman and other members of the Commission shall be appointed by the Sadar-i-Riyasat provided that as nearly as may be one-half of the members of the Commission shall be persons who at the dates of their respective appointments have held office for at least ten years under the Government.

Elections : The superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of the electoral rolls for, and the conduct

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of, the elections shall be vested in an Election Commissioner to be appointed by the Sadar-i-Riyasat.

There shall be one general electoral roll for every territorial constituency for election to either House of the Legislature and no person shall be ineligible for inclusion in any such roll or claim to be included in any special electoral roll for any such constituency on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or any of them.

The elections to the Legislative Assembly shall be on the basis of adult suffrage.

The Academy of Arts and Culture : There shall be an Academy of Arts, Culture and Language in the State where opportunities will be afforded for the development of Art and Culture of the State and for development of its languages.

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